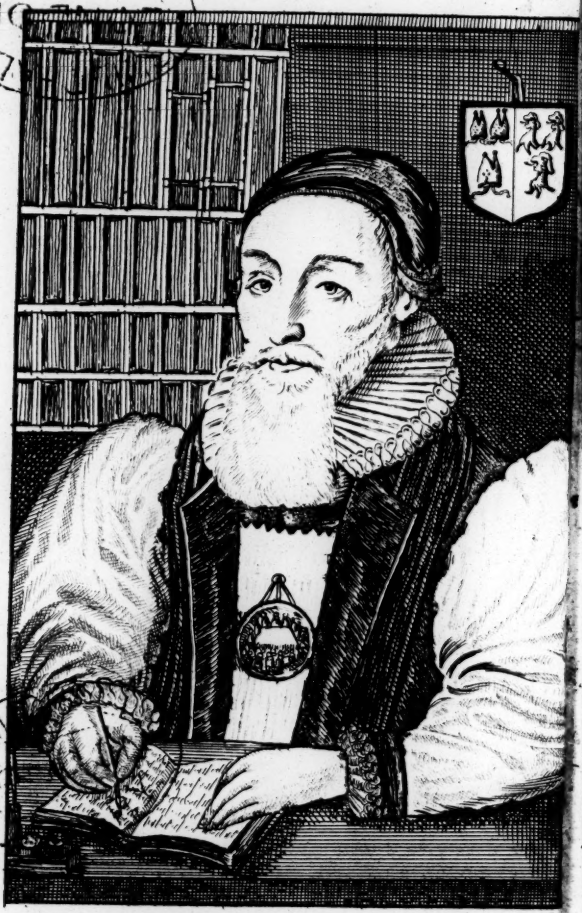

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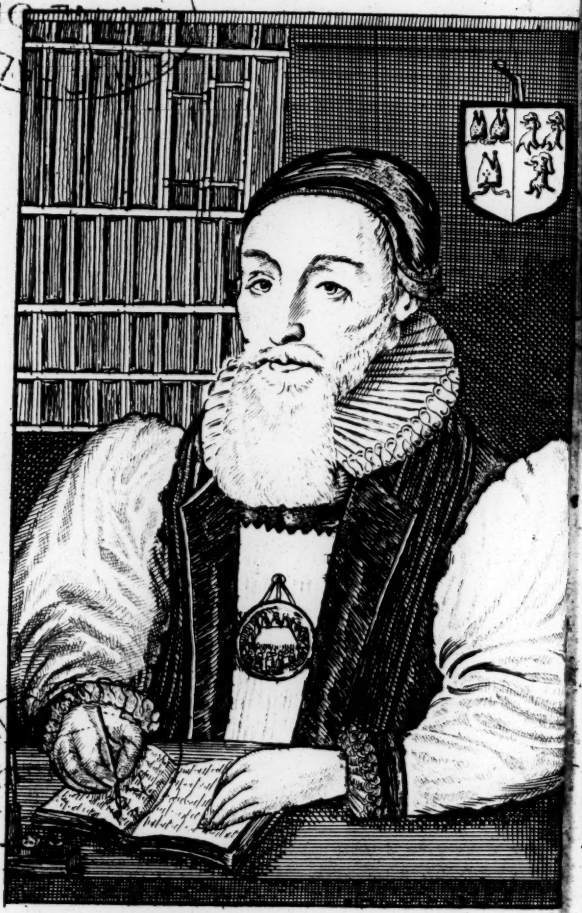

Vera Effigies Reveren di Do.ni
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SELECT THOUGHTS,

OR

Choice Helps

FOR A

PIOUS SPIRIT:

A Century of Divine Breathings for a Raviſhed Soul, beholding the Excellency of her Lord *Jeſus*.

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By *J. Hall*, B. N.

To which is added,

The BREATHINGS OF THE DEVOUT SOUL.

LONDON,

Printed by *T. M.* for *Obadiah Blagrave*, at the Bear in St. *Pauls* Church-Yard, 1682.

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Select Thoughts,

One Century.

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I.

IF Miracles be ceaſed, yet Marvails will never ceaſe. There is no creature in the world, wherein we may ſee enough to wonder at; for there is no worm of the earth, no ſpire of graſs, no leaf, no twig, wherein we may not ſee the footſteps of a Deity: The beſt viſible Creature is man; now, what man is he that can make but an hair, or a ſtraw, much leſs any ſenſitive creature; ſo as no leſs than an infinite power is ſeen in every object that preſents it ſelf to our eyes; if therefore we look only upon the outſides of theſe bodily ſubſtances, and do not ſee God in every thing, we are no better then brutiſh; making uſe meerly of our ſence without the leaſt improvement of our faith, or our reaſon: Contrary then to the opinion of thoſe men, who hold that a

wise man should admire nothing, I say, that a man truly wise and good should admire every thing,or rather that infiniteness of wisdom and omnipotence which shews it self in every visible object: Lord what a beast am I that I have suffered mine eyes to be taken up with shapes, and colours and quantities, and have not lookt deeper at thee (with awful adoration and wonder (in every parcel of thy great Creation: Henceforth let me see nothing but thee, and look at all visible things, but as the meer shadows of a glorious omnipotence.

II.

Our affections are then only safe and right,when they are deduced from God,& have their rise from Heaven:then only can I take comfort of my love, when I can love my wife, my child, my friend, my self, my pleasures, and whatsoever contentments in God; thus I may be sure not to offend either in the object or measure; no man can in God love whom he should not, nor immoderately love whom he should: this holy respect doth both direct and limit him; and shuts up his delights in the conscience

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ſcience of a lawfull fruition: the like muſt be ſaid of our Joy, and fear, and grief, and whatever other affection; for we cannot derive our Joy from God, if we place it upon any ſinful thing, or if we exceed in the meaſure of things allowed; we cannot fetch our fear from Heaven, if it be cowardly and deſperate, nor our grief, if it be meerly wordly and heartleſs. And if our affections do begin from above, they will ſurely end there, cloſing up in that God, who is the Author and orderer of them; and ſuch as our affections are, ſuch will be the whole diſpotion of the ſoul, and the whole carriage of our actions: Theſe are the feet of the ſoul, and which way the feet walk, the whole man goes; happy is the man that can be ſo far the maſter of himſelf, as to entertain no affections but ſuch as he takes upon the rebound from Heaven.

III.

Whence is this delicate ſcent in this Roſe, and Violet? It is not from the root, that ſmells of nothing; not from the ſtalk, that is as ſenſeleſs as the root; not from the earth whence it grows, which contri-

butes no more to these flowers, then to the grass that grows by them; not from the leaf, not from the bud before it be disclosed, which yields no more fragrance then the leaf or stolk, or root; yet here I now find it; neither is it here by any miraculous way, but in an ordinary course of nature; for all Violets and Roses of this kind yield the same redolence; it cannot be, but that it was potentially in that root, and stem from which the flowers proceed, and there placed, and thence drawn by that Almighty power which hath given these admirable vertues to several plants, and educes them in his due seasons to these excellent perfections. It is the same hand that works spiritually in his elect; out of the soil of the renewed heart, watered with the dew of Heaven, and warmed with the beams of his Spirit, God can, and in his own season doth bring forth those sweet odors of Grace, and holy dispositions, which are most pleasing to himself; and if those excellencies be so closely lodged in their bosoms, that they do not discover themselves at all times, it should be no more strange to us, then that this

Rose

Roſe and Violet are not to be found, but in their own months; it is enough that the ſame vertue is ſtill in the root, though the flower be baniſhed.

IV.

A man that looks at all things through the conſideration of eternity, makes no more of a man then of a flower; that laſts ſome days, he laſts ſome years; at their period both fade: Now, what difference is there to be made betwixt days and years in the thoughts of an eternal duration? herein therefore I have a great advantage of a carnal heart; ſuch a one bounding his narrow conceits with the preſent condition, is ready to admire himſelf and others, for what they have or are, and is therefore dejected upon every miſcarriage: whereas I behold my ſelf, or that man, in all his glory, as vaniſhing; onely meaſuring every mans felicity by the hopes and interreſt which he hath in a bleſſed eternity.

V.

When I am dead and forgotten, the world will be as it is, the ſame ſucceſſions and varieties of ſeaſons, the ſame revolu-

tions of Heaven, the ſame changes of Earth and Sea, the like occurrents of natural events, and human affairs. It is not in my power to alter the courſe of things, or to prevent what muſt be: What ſhould I do, but quietly take my part of the preſent, and humbly leave the care of the future to that all-wiſe providence, which ordereth all things (even the moſt croſs events) according to his moſt holy and juſt purpoſes?

VI.

The Scripture is the Sun, the Church is the Clock, whoſe hand points us to, and whoſe ſound tells us the hours of the day, the Sun we know to be ſure, and regularly conſtant in his motion; the Clock as it may fall out, may go too faſt, or too ſlow; we are wont to look at, and liſten to the Clock to know the time of the day, but where we find the variation ſenſible, to believe the Sun againſt the Clock, not the Clock againſt the Sun. As then we would condemn him of much folly, that ſhould profeſs to truſt the Clock rather then the Sun; ſo we cannot but juſtly tax the miſcredulity of thoſe who will rather truſt

to

to the Church then to the Scripture.

VII.

What marvellous high reſpects hath God given to man above all his other viſible Creatures! what an houſe hath he put him into! how glorioufly arched, how richly pavemented! Wherefore ſerves all the furniture of Heaven and Earth, but for his uſe? What delicate proviſion hath that bountiful hand made for his palate, both of meats and liquors, by Land and Sea? What rich ornaments hath he laid up for him in his Wardrobe of earth and waters? and wherefore ſerves the various muſick of Birds, but to pleaſe his ear? For, as for the brute Creatures, all harmony to them is but as ſilence. Wherefore ſerves the excellent variety of Flowers, ſurpaſſing *Solomon* in all his glory, but to pleaſe his eye? meer graſs is more acceptable to Beaſts. Yea, what Creature but he is capable to ſurvey Gods wonders in the deep? to contemplate the great fabrick of the Heavens? to obſerve the glorious bodies, and regular motions of the Sun, Moon, Stars; and (which exceeds all conceivable mercies) who but

he is capable of that celeſtial Glory, which is within that beautiful contignation? to be a companion of the bleſſed Angels, yea to be a limb of the myſtical Body of the eternal Son of God, and to partake with him of his everlaſting and incomprehenſible glory? *Lord, what is man that thou art thus mindful of him?* and how utterly unworthy are we even of common mercies, if we return not to our God, more advantage of glory, then thoſe poor creatures that were made for us, and which cannot in nature be ſenſible of his favours?

VIII.

How plain is it that all ſenſitive things are ordered by an inſtinct from their Maker? He that gives them being, puts into them their ſeveral diſpoſitions, inclinations, faculties, operations. If we look to Birds; the Mavis, the Black-bird, the Red-breaſt have throats tunable to any note, as we dayly ſee they may be taught ſtrains utterly varying from their natural tones, yet they all naturally have the ſame ſongs and accents different from each other, and fully according to their own kind; ſo as every Mavis hath the ſame ditty with his fel-

fellows: If we mark the building of their nests, each kind obſerves it own faſhion and materials, ſome clay, others moſs, hair, ſticks; yea if their very motions and reitings, they are conform to their own feather, different from others. If to Beaſts, they all untaught obſerve the faſhions of their ſeveral kinds. *Galen* obſerves that when he was diſſecting a She-goat big with young, a Kid then ready to be yeaned ſtarts out, and walks up and down the room, and there being in the ſame place, ſet ſeveral veſſels of oyl, hony, water, milk, the new faln Kid ſmells at them all, and refuſing the reſt falls to lapping of the milk; whereupon he juſtly infers, that nature ſtays not for a Teacher. Neither is it other in Flies, and all ſorts of the meaneſt vermine, all Bees build alike, and order the Common-wealth of their hive in one manner; all Ants keep their own way in their houſing, journeys, proviſions; all Spiders do as perfectly and uniformly weave their web, as if they had been Apprentiſes to the trade, the ſame inſtincts are ſeen alſo in the rational Creatures, although in moſt caſes overruled by their higher faculties. What

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What an infinite providence then is this we live under, that hath diſtributed to every creature, as a ſeveral form, ſo ſeveral inclinations, qualities, motions, proper to their own kind, and different from other; and keeps them in this conſtant uniformity, and variety, for the delight and contentment of man! O God, that I could be capable of enough wondring at thy great works! that I could be enough humbled under the ſenſe of my own incapacity, that I could give thee ſo much more glory, as I find more vileneſs in my ſelf.

IX.

When I ſaw my precious watch (now through an unhappy fall grown irregular) taken aſunder, and lying ſcattered upon the workmans ſhop-board; ſo as here lay a wheel, there the balance, here one gimmer, there another, ſtraight my ignorance was ready to think, when and how will all theſe ever peece together again in their former order? But when the skilful *Artiſan* had taken it a while in hand, and curiouſly pinned the joynts, it now began to return to its wonted ſhape, and

and conſtant motion, as if it had never been diſordered: How could I chuſe but ſee in this, the juſt emblem of a diſtempered Church and State? wherein if all ſeem disjoynted, and every wheel laid aſide by it ſelf, ſo as an unknowing beholder would diſpair of a redreſs, yet if it ſhall pleaſe the great *Artiſt* of Heaven to put his hand unto it, how ſoon might it return to an happy reſetlement? Even ſo, bleſſed Lord, for thy great mercies ſake make up the breaches of thy *Sion*, and repair the ruines of thy *Jeruſalem*.

X.

We are, and we are not, all one mans children: Our bodies once met in one root, but our minds and diſpoſitions do ſo differ, as if we had never been of kin: one man is ſo gentle and plauſible that he would fain pleaſe all; another is ſo churliſh and dogged that he cares not whom he diſpleaſes, and hardly can be well pleaſed with himſelf: One ſo ſparing and pinching that he grudges himſelf neceſſaries, another ſo vainly laviſh, that he cares not how he ſquanders his eſtate: one is tenderly pitiful, another mercileſly cruel;

el; one religiouſly devout, another wildly profane; one cowardly fearful, another deſperately couragious: one jovially cheerful and lightſome, another ſad and dumpiſh, even to ſtupidity: one petulant and wanton, another auſterely continent; one humble and low-conceited of rich indowments, another ſwoln big with a little. He did never read men to purpoſe that is too much troubled with the harſh and unpleaſing contrariety of humors, which he meets with in the world; and he ſhall be too unthankful to God, that finding himſelf better compoſed then others, knows not whether to aſcribe it; and too neglective of himſelf, that finding his own diſtempered, labors not to rectifie it.

XI.

Nature, Law, and Grace divide all the Ages of the world; now as it is in man (who is a leſſer world) that in every day there is a reſemblance of his whole life; the morning is his childhood, the mid-day his youth, the evening his old age; ſo is it in this greater World; the dim break of day was the ſtate of nature, and this was

was the non-age of the world, wherein the light of knowledg, both of humane and divine things was but weak and obſcure. The Sun was riſen higher in the ſtate of the Law, but yet not without thick mists and ſhadows, till the high-noon of that true Sun of Righteouſneſs, who perſonally ſhone forth to the world; upon whoſe vertical point began the age of Grace, that ſtill continues, which is the clear afternoon, and full vigour of the World, though now in its ſenſible declination: after this, there ſhall be no time, but eternity. Theſe then are they, which both the Prophets and Apoſtles have ſtyled the laſt days; not only in reſpect of the times that went before them, but in regard that no time ſhall follow them: neither have we reaſon to bogle at the large latitude of ſixteen hundred years; there was neither of the two other periods of age, but were longer then this: Beſides, how ever, childhood and youth have their fixed terms which they ordinarily paſs not, yet the duration of old age is indefinight: We have in our youth known ſome gray heads that have continued vi-

gorous

gorous, till we have lived to match them in the colour of their livery.

And if this be (as it is) the Evening of the World, do we not ſee much difference of time in the ſhutting in of the Light? A Summers Evening, is a Winters day; but if theſe were to the Apoſtles the laſt days, how can they be other then in the laſt hour, yea, the laſt minute unto us?

Why do we not put our ſelves into a conſtant expectation of the end of all things, and ſet our ſelves in a meet poſture for the receit of our returning Saviour?

XII.

It is a feeling and experimental expreſſion that the Apoſtle gives of a Chriſtian, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. That *he looks not on the things which are ſeen*; not that his eyes are ſo dim as old *Iſaacs*, that he cannot diſcern them, or that his inward ſenſes are ſo ſtupified, that he cannot judge of their true value: but that, taking an exact view of theſe earthly things, he diſcries ſo much vanity in them, as that he finds them not worthy to be lookt at with the full bent of his deſires;

ſires; like as it is not the meet ſight of a ſtrange beauty that is forbidden (for a man may as well look upon a fair face, as upon a good picture) but a ſetled and fixed aſpect, that feeds the eye, and draws the heart to a ſinful concupiſcence: Thus doth not the Chriſtian look upon the things that are ſeen, as making them the full ſcope and aym of his deſires and affections: So far he takes notice of them, as to make his beſt (that is, lawful and moderate) uſe of them; not ſo, as to make them the chief object of his contemplation, the main drift of his cares. It is well obſerved by S. *Baſil*, that as there are two contrary ways, the broad, and the narrow; ſo there are two guides, as contrary, *Senſe* and *Faith*: *Senſe* preſents to us the pleaſing delights of this world, on the one ſide; on the other, the preſent afflictions and perſecutions that attend a good profeſſion: *Faith* lays before us the glorious things of a future life, and the endleſs miſeries and torments abiding for ſinful ſouls in the world to come: Now, it is not for every one to deny all credit to his ſenſe, alluring him with all preſent, and

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and visible pleasures, and discouraging him with the terror and pain of present and visible afflictions, and to yield himself hoodwinkt, to be led by Faith, forepromising only better things afar off, and foreadmonishing him of dangers, future and invisible. Faith onely is that heroical vertue, which makes a man with an holy contempt to overlook all the pleasing baits of the world, and with a brave courage and fortitude to despise all the menaces, and painful inflictions of his present fury: This works our eyes, not to look upon the things which we cannot but see, the present shews of the world, whether alluring, or terrifying: Had *Lot* but lookt back on *Sodom*; the pleasant plain of *Sodom*, that lay like the Garden of God behinde his back, he had never escaped into the mountain: Had the glorious *Protomartyr* fixed his eyes onely upon his persecutors, his heart could not but have failed, to see the fire in their faces, the sparkling of their eyes, the grinding of their teeth, the bending of their brows, the stopping of their ears, their furious running upon him, their violent halings and

and dragings; and laſtly, a whole volly of ſtones diſcharged mortally upon him; he had been utterly daunted with ſuch an impetuoſity of death: But he, as not ſeeing any of this pomp, and oſtentation of horror, looks up ſtedfaſtly to Heaven, and there ſees (that which might well make him blind to all other viſible objects) the Heavens open, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God; and upon this ſight, he ſhut up his eyes, and ſlept. The true Chriſtian then, hath with holy *Job*, made a covenant with his eyes, not to look upon, either the cruel inſolencies of the raging world with fear and dejectedneſs, or on the tempting vanities of the world with amorous glances; but with a ſober and conſtant reſolution entertains the objects of both kinds. Very juſtly did *Tertullian* jeer that Heathen Philoſopher, who pulled out his eyes to avoid concupiſcence; and can tell him, that a Chriſtian can hold his eyes, and yet behold Beauty unbewitched; and can be at once open-eyed to nature, and blind to luſt: and what the Apoſtle ſaid of the Uſe, he can practiſe of the ſight of the world,

and

and earthly objects; he can ſo behold them, as if he beheld them not. How oft have we, in a deep ſtudy fixed our eyes upon that, which we, the while thought not upon, neither perceived that we ſaw? So doth the Chriſtian to theſe worldly glories, pleaſures, profits, whiles his mind and affections are on *the things above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God*, Coloſ. 3. 1, 2. There, Lord, let me behold thoſe things which cannot yet be ſeen, but ſhall, once, in the ſight of them make me bleſſed: And let me not look on the things that are ſeen; for the things that are ſeen are temporary, but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal.

XIII.

There is not more ſtrangneſs then ſignificance in that charge of the Apoſtle, That we ſhould *put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 13. 14. Gal. 3. 27. The ſoul is (as it were) a body; not really and properly ſo, according to the groſs error of *Tertullian*; but by way of alluſion: This body of the ſoul, then, may not be naked, but muſt be clad; as our firſt parents were aſhamed of their bodily nakedneſs,

(and

(and ſo ſtill are all their (not ſavage) poſterity,) ſo may we of our ſpiritual. Every ſinner is naked; thoſe rags that he hath, are ſo far from hiding his nakedneſs, that they are part of it; his faireſt moralities are but glittering ſins, and his ſins are his nakedneſs: *Ex.*32.25. *Aaron* had made *Iſrael* naked to their ſhame; not ſo much in that they were ſtripped of their earings, as that they were enwrapped in the ſin of Idolatry. No marvel if we run away, and hide us from the preſence of God, as our firſt parents did, whiles we are guilty to our ſelves of our Spiritual deformity: As then we are bodily naked, when we come into the world, ſo we are ſpiritually naked whiles we are of the world; neither can it be either ſafe, or comely for us, till we be covered: There is no clothing can fit the ſoul but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; all other robes in the wardrobe of Earth, or Heaven, are too ſhort, too ſtraight; like thoſe which the ſcorn of *Hanun* put upon *Davids* meſſengers, reaching but to the hams; for though the ſoul of man be finite, the ſin of the ſoul is ſcarce ſo; and that ſin muſt be covered, elſe there can be

be no ſafety for the ſoul, according to that of the *Pſalmiſt*: Pſal. 32. 1. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered*: None therefore but the robe of an infinite Righteouſneſs, can cover the ſoul ſo wofully dreſſed; none therefore but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is God bleſſed for ever, can cover the ſoul, that it may not appear unrighteous; or can cleanſe the ſoul that it may not be unrighteous; and cleanſed it muſt be, ere the Lord Jeſus can be put on: We ſhall wrong his perfit holineſs, if we think we can ſlip him on, as a caſe, over our beaſtly rags: It is with us, as with *Joſhua* the High Prieſt; *Zech.* 3. 4. The filthy garments muſt firſt be taken off, and then the Lord ſhall ſay unto us: *Behold, I have cauſed thine iniquity to paſs from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of rayment.*

We put on a garment when we apply it all over to our body; ſo as that part which is clothed, appears not, but is defended from the air, and from the eye: if we have truly put on the Lord Jeſus, nothing of ours is ſeen, but Chriſt is all in all to us; although this application goes yet deeper;

deeper; for we ſo put him on, that we not only put our ſelves into him, but alſo put him into our ſelves, by a mutual kind of Spiritual incorporation.

We put him on then, upon our Intellectual parts, by knowing him, by believing on him. (*This is eternal life to know thee, and whom thou haſt ſent*, ſaith our Saviour) and for Faith, no grace doth ſo ſenſibly apprehend him, and make him ſo feelingly ours.

We put him on upon our wills and affections, when we take pleaſure in him, when we love him, delight in him, and prefer him to our chiefeſt Joy.

Thus do we put him on; as our Lord, in our humble and dutiful ſubjection; as our Jeſus, in our faithful affiance; as Chriſt, the anointed of God, to be our King, in all holy obedience; our Prieſt, in our willing conſecration to him; our Prophet, in our cheerful readineſs to be inſtructed by him: How happy are we, if we be thus decked; we prank up theſe poor carcaſſes of ours gaily, with no ſmall expence; and when we have done, the ſtuff, or the faſhion, or both, wears out to nothing:

thing: But, here is a garment that will never be out of fashion; *Jesus Christ yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever*; yea, the same to us: here we put him on in Grace, there in eternal Glory.

The *Israelites* were forty years in the wilderness, *Deut.* 26. yet their shooes not worn, their opparel not impaired; but this attire shall not only hold good in the time of our wandring in this desart, but after we are come into the *Canaan* of glory, and is best at last. Wherefore do we put on our choicest attire on some high days, but to testifie the cheerfulness of our hearts: *Eccles.* 9. 7, 8. *Let thy garment be white*, saith the Preacher, *for now God accepteth thy works*: *Mephibosheth* changed not his raiment since *David* went out, as one that would have the sorrow of his heart seen in the neglect of his clothes; although many a one under a gay coat hath an heavy heart, but this attire doth not only testifie, but make cheerfulness in soul; Psal. 4. 7. *Thou hast given me more joy of heart, then they had in the time that their corn and their wine increased*; and, *In thy presence is the fulness of joy*; what can this

this apparel of ours do but keep us from a blaſt, or a ſhower? it is ſo far from ſafe-guarding the ſoul, that it many times wounds it, and that to the death. It was one of the main quarrels againſt the rich glutton, that he was every day clothed in purple, and byſs, *Luke.* 16. 19. How many ſouls ſhall once wiſh that their bodies had been ever either naked, or clad with hair-cloth? But this aray, as it is infinitely rich and beautiful, ſo it is as ſurely defenſative of the ſoul; and is no leſs then armour of proof againſt all aſſaults, all miſeries, *Epheſ.* 6.

What a deal of coſt and pains do we beſtow upon theſe wretched bodies of ours, only to make them pleaſing and lovely to the eye of ſome beholders, as miſerable, perhaps as our ſelves; and yet when we have all done, we are (it may be) no better then hard-favour'd, and unhandſome creatures, and contemptible in thoſe eyes from whom we deſired moſt approbation; *Jezebel*, for all her licking, is caſt out of the window, and troden to dirt in the ſtreets: But this robe we cannot wear and not be amiable in the eyes of the holieſt:

lieſt: *Behold thou art fair, my beloved; behold thou art fair, and there is no ſpot in thee.* *Cant.* 1. 15 Lo, in this caſe, the apparel makes the man, neither is it in the power of any ſpiritual deformity, to make us other than lovely in the ſight of our God, while we have Chriſt put on upon us. Whatever therefore become of the outward man, let it be my care that my ſoul be veſted with my Lord Jeſus; ſo ſhall I be ſure, to be ſafe, rich, amiable here, and hereafter glorious.

It was part of our Saviours charge upon the mount, *Take no care what to put on*, but it muſt be the main care of our lives how to put on Chriſt upon our ſouls: This is the prime ſtole wherewith the father of the Prodigal, graceth his returned ſon; the Heaven of Heavens is not worth ſuch another; when I have once got this on my back, I ſhall ſay, though in a contrary ſenſe, with the Spouſe in the *Canticles*: Cant. 5. 3. *I have put on my coat, how ſhall I put it off? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?*

XIV.

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XIV.

With how devout paſſion doth the Pſalmiſt call to all the works of the Almighty to praiſe him; as well ſuppoſing, that every creature (even thoſe that have no tongues to ſpeak for themſelves) yet have a tongue to praiſe their Maker; Pſal. 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work; Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledg: There is no ſpeech nor language, where their voyce is not heard:* neither is the very earth defective in this duty: Every plant ſayes, look on me; and acknowledg, the life, colour, form, ſmell, fruit, force, that I have from the power of my Creator: every worm and flie ſayes, look on me, and give God the praiſe of my living, ſenſe, and motion: every bird ſayes; hear me, and praiſe that God who hath given me theſe various feathers, and taught me theſe ſeveral notes: every beaſt, whiles he bellows, bleats, brays, barks, roars, ſays, It is God that hath given me this ſhape, this ſound; yea the very mute fiſhes, are in their very ſilence, vocal, in magnifying the infinite wiſdom

and power of him that made them, an
placed them in those watery habitations
Psal. *ult. ult. Let every thing that ha*
breath, saith the Psalmist, *praise the Lor*
Yea the very Winds whistle, and the Se
roars out the praise of the Almighty, wh
both raises, and allays them at pleasure
what a shame were it for Man, to whom
alone God hath given an understanding
heart, a nimble tongue, and articulat
language, wherein he can express his ra
tional thoughts, to be wanting to this
universal devotion? and to be as insensibl
of the great works of God, as the groun
that he treads upon? If others shall b
thus unthankfully dumb, Psal. 103. 1, 2
Yet praise thou the Lord, O my soul, and a
that is within me bless his holy name; Psal
146. 1, 2. *whiles I live will I praise th*
Lord; *I will sing praises to my God whilst*
have any Being. But alas Lord thou know
est, I cannot so much will to praise thee
without thee; do thou fill my heart with
holy desires, and my mouth with songs o
thanksgiving.

XV. I

XV.

It may ſeem a ſtrang errand upon which our Saviour tells us he came into the world; Luke 12. 49. *I am come to ſend fire on the Earth:* When the two fervent Diſciples would have had fire ſent down from Heaven upon but a Samaritan Village, our Saviour rebuked them, and told them they knew not of what ſpirit they were; yet here, he makes it his own buſineſs, to ſend fire on the earth: Alas (may we think) we have fire too much already? how happy were it rather, if the fire which is kindled in the world, were well quenched; and what is the main drift of the Prince of darkneſs but fire? If not to ſend fire down from Heaven, upon the inhabitants of the earth; yet, to ſend the inhabitants of the earth down to the fire of hell? As then we find divers kinds of material fire, Celeſtial, Elementary, Domeſtique, Artificial, Natural; ſo their is no leſs variety of ſpiritual fires: It was in fiery, cloven, tongues, wherein the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon the Apoſtles, *Acts* 2. in their Pentecoſt; *Joh.* 16. 7. and even this

fire did our Saviour come to ſend dow
on the Earth: Thy Word was in me a
Fire, ſaith the Prophet; *Jer.* 5. 14. an
did not our Hearts burn within u
(ſaid the two Diſciples, in their walk t
Emaus) *Luk.* 23. 32. whiles he talke
with us; This Fire he alſo came to ſend
Heavenly Love, and holy Zeal are Fire
Cant. 8. 7. *Many Waters cannot quenc
Love.* Pſal. 119. 139. *My Zeal hath co
ſumed me*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt: and thes
Fires our Saviour came to ſend into th
Hearts of Men; holy Thoughts are n
other than the beams of celeſtial Fire
Pſal. 39. 4. *My Heart was hot within m
whiles I was muſing, the Fire burned*, an
theſe, we know he ſends: Pſal. 104. 4
Heb. 1. 7. *He maketh his Angels Spirits, an
his Miniſters a flame of Fire*: Theſe he ſend
forth to the Earth to miniſter for them
that ſhall be *Heirs of Salvation*: Heb. 1 14
beſides theſe, Afflictions and Perſecution
are Fire: We have paſſed through Fir
and Water: 1 Pet. 4. 12. *Beloved, thin
it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal, whic
is co try you, as if ſome ſtrange thing ha
happened to you*: and even theſe are of hi
ſend

ſending; Lam. 4. 11. *The Lord hath kindled a Fire in* Zion, *and it hath devoured the Foundations thereof.* There is no evil in the City, but the Lord hath done it: *The Lord hath done that which he had deviſed, he hath thrown down, and not pitied,* Lam. 2. 17.

But this Expreſſion of our Saviour goes yet deeper, and alludes to the effect of Separation, which follows upon the Fire of our tryal: When the lump of Oar is put into the Furnace, the Fire tryes the pure Mettal from the Droſs, and makes an actual diviſion of the one from the other; ſo doth Chriſt by his Word, and Spirit; even he that is the Prince and God of Peace, comes to ſet diviſion in the World. Surely, there are holy Quarrels worthy of his Engagement; for, as the Fleſh luſteth and warreth againſt the Spirit, ſo the Spirit fighteth againſt the Fleſh; and this Duel may well beſeem God for the Author, and the Son of God for the Setter of it: theſe ſecond Blows make an happy Fray.

Nothing is more properly compared than Diſcord to Fire; *Judges* 9. 20. this,

Chriſt (the firſt thing he does) ſets in every Heart: there is all quietneſs, ſecure eaſe, and ſelf-contentment in the Soul, till Chriſt come there: How ſhould it be other, when Satan ſways all without reſiſtance? but when once Chriſt offers to enter, there are ſtraight civil Wars in the Soul betwixt the old Man, and the new; and it fares with the Heart, as with an Houſe divided in it ſelf, wherein the Huſband and the Wife are at variance; nothing is to be heard, but unquiet janglings, open brawlings, ſecret oppoſition; the Houſhold takes part, and profeſſes a mutual vexation: This Spiritual ſelf-diviſion, where ever it is, though it be troubleſome, yet it is cordial; it puts the Soul into the ſtate of *Rebekah*'s Womb; which barren, yielded no pain; but when an *Eſau* and *Jacob* were conceived, and ſtrugling yielded for the time, no eaſe; yet this was that which cauſed her juſt Joy, That ſhe had not ſo many Children, as Nations in her Womb; even ſo the trouble of this inward conflict is abundantly requited with the Joy of this aſſurance, That now Chriſt is come into our Soul, and is working

ing his own desired Ends, in, and upon us. Let vain and sensual Hearts please themselves in their inward peace and calmness; there cannot be a greater sign of gracelessness and disfavour of God; When they shall say Peace, Peace, then shall come upon them sudden destruction: The old word was, no safety in War; here it is contrary, It is this intestine war of the Heart, with Fire and Sword to our Corruptions, that must bring us true rest for the present, and hereafter eternal peace and happiness. Now, Lord, since it is thy desire that this Fire should be kindled, kindle thou and enflame my Heart with a fervent desire. and endeavour that this thy desire may be accomplished in me: Set me at war with my self, that I may be at peace with thee.

XVI.

In all that we have to do with God, he justly requires and expects from us, an awful disposition of Heart towards his Infiniteness; hereupon it was that he delivered his Law in Thunder, Fire, Smoak, and all dreadful Magnificence. And when upon the same day, he would send down

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his Spirit, for the propagation of the Gospel, it was done with an aſtoniſhing Majeſty; with a ſound from Heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty Wind, and with the apparition of cloven and fiery Tongnes: *Act.* 2. 2, 12. And as it was thus in the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt in the miraculous Gifts; ſo it is in the ſanctifying Graces. Seldom ever doth God by them ſeize upon the Heart, but with a vehement concuſſion going before: That of St. *Paul's* converſion, was extraordinary and miraculous; but in ſome degree it is thus, in every Soul; We are ſtruck down firſt, and are made ſenſible of our ſpiritual blindneſs, ere our full call be accompliſhed: as it was with *Elijah* in the Mount of *Horeb*, There came firſt a ſtrong Wind that tore the Rocks, and Mountains, and after that, an Earth-quake, then a Fire, before the ſtill ſmall Voice; ſo it is uſually in our Breaſts, ere the comfortable voice of God's Spirit ſpeak to our Hearts, there muſt be ſome bluſterings, and flaſhes of the Law: It is our honour, and his favour, that we are allowed to love God, it is our duty to fear him: We may be

too

too familiar in our Love, we cannot be too awful in our fear.

XVII.

All valuations of theſe outward things are arbitrary, according to the opinion of their Pleaſure, or their rarity, or the neceſſity of their uſe: Did not Mens minds ſet a price upon Mettals, what were they better than ſome other entrails of the Earth, or one better than other? If by publick Law the Mint were ordained to be only ſupplyed by our Stanneries, how currantly would they paſs for more precious than Silver Mines? To an Indian, a Bracelet of worthleſs Beads is eſtimated above his Gold, an hungry *Eſau* values a Meſs of Pottage above his Birth-right: In the Siege of *Samaria* an Aſſes Head was ſold for fourſcore pieces of Silver; and a Kab of Doves Dung for five pieces: 2 *Kings* 6. 25. We have heard that thoſe of *Angola* have valued a Dog at the price of many Slaves. In all theſe earthly Commodities, the Market riſes, and falls according to conceit, and occaſion; neither is there any intrinſecal, and ſetled worth in any of them; only Spiritual things, as

Vertue

Vertue and Grace are good in themſelves; and ſo carry their infinite value in them, that they make their owner abſolutely rich, and happy: When therefore I ſee a rich Man hugging his Bags, and admiring his Wealth, I look upon that Man with pity, as knowing the poorneſs of that Pelf wherein he placeth his Felicity; neither can I behold him with other Eyes, than thoſe, wherewith, a diſcreet *European* ſees a ſavage *Indian* priding himſelf in thoſe Trifles, which our Children have learned to contemn: On the other ſide when I ſee a Man rich in the endowments of Mind, well-fraught with knowledg, eminent in goodneſs, and truly gracious, I ſhall riſe up to that Man (how homely ſo ever his outſide be) as the moſt precious and excellent piece which this World can afford.

XVIII.

Should I but ſee an Angel, I ſhould look (with *Manoah*) to die no other Death than the ſight of that Glory; and yet even that Angel is fain to hide his Face, as not able to behold the infinite Majeſty of God his Creator: When *Moſes* did

did but talk with God in the Mount, for forty days, his Face did ſo ſhine, that the *Iſraelites* could not look upon the luſtre of his Countenance, even the very preſence of the Divine Majeſty not only hath, but communicates Glory: Lord, that I could ſee but ſome glimpſe of the reflection of thoſe glorious Beams of thine upon my Soul; how happy ſhould I be in this Viſion, whoſe next degree is perfectly beatifical.

XIX.

As good, ſo evil is apt to be communicative of it ſelf; and this ſo much more, as it meets with ſubjects more capable of evil than good: the Breath of a Plague-ſick Man taints the Air round about him; yea, the very ſight of blear Eyes infects the ſound; and one yawning Mouth ſtretcheth many Jaws: How many have we known, that have been innocent in their retiredneſs, miſerably debaucht with leud Converſation? Next to being good, is, to conſort with the Vertuous; It is the moſt merciful improvement of an holy power to ſeparate the precious from the vile; it is the higheſt praiſe of a conſtant

goodneſs, for a *Lot* to be righteous in th midſt of *Sodom.*

XX.

We are all apt to put off the blame o our miſcarriages from our ſelves: Eve in Paradiſe we did ſo: It was the Woma ſaith *Adam*, it was the Serpent, ſaith th Woman: How have we heard fon Gameſters caſt the blame of their ill Luc upon the ſtanders by, which intermedle nothing but by a ſilent Eye-ſight: So th idolatrous *Pagans* of old, tho flagitiouſl wicked, yet could impute their public Judgments to none but the Chriſtian whoſe only innocence was their Protect on from utter ruine; So fooliſhly partia doth our ſelf-love render us to our ow demerits, that all are guilty ſave ou ſelves: Yea, rather than we will wan ſhifts, our very Stars ſhall be blamed which are no more acceſſary to ou harms, than our Eyes are to the Eclipſe of their moſt eminent Lights. As on th contrary, we are ready to arrogate unt our ſelves thoſe Bleſſings which the mee bounty of Divine Providence hath ca upon us; whereto we could not contri-

but

bute ſo much as an Hand to receive them, but by the Mercy of the Giver. It cannot be well with me, till I have learned to correct this palpable injuſtice in both; challenging to my ſelf all my Errors, and Guilt of Sufferings, and yielding to God the praiſe his own free and gracious beneficence.

XA'.

How profitable and beneficial a thing is Affliction; eſpecially to ſome Diſpoſitions more than other: I ſee ſome Trees that will not thrive, unleſs their Roots be laid bare; unleſs (beſides pruning) their Bodies be gaſhed and ſliced; others, that are too luxuriant, except divers of their Bloſſoms be ſeaſonably pull'd off, yield nothing: I ſee too rank Corn, if it be not timely eaten down, may yield ſomething to the Barn, but little to the Granary: I ſee ſome full Bodies, that can enjoy no Health without ſtrong Evacuations, Blood-lettings, Fontinels; ſuch is the condition of our ſpiritual part: It is a rare Soul that can be kept in any conſtant order without theſe ſmarting Remedies; I confeſs mine cannot: How wild had I run,

run, if the Rod had not been over me? Every Man can ſay he thanks God for Eaſe; for me, I bleſs God for my Troubles.

XXII.

When I conſider what an inſenſible Atome Man is, in compariſon of the whole body of the Earth; and what a meer Center-point the Earth is, in compariſon of the vaſt circumference of Heaven; and what an almoſt infinite diſtance there is betwixt this point of Earth, and that large Circle of the Firmament; and therewithal think of the innumerable number, and immenſe greatneſs of thoſe heavenly Luminaries: I cannot but apprehend how improbable it is, that thoſe Stars ſhould, at ſuch a diſtance, diſtinguiſh betwixt one Man, and another; betwixt one Limb of the ſame Body, and another; betwixt one ſpot of Earth, and another; and in ſo great a mixture, and confuſion of Influences, ſhould give any diſtinct intimation of particular Events in Nature; and much more of meer contingencies of arbitrary Affairs. As for the Moon, by reaſon of her vicinity to the Earth, and

ſen

ſenſible predominance over moyſture; and for the Sun the great Magazine of Light and Heat, I acknowledg their powerful (but unpartial) operations upon this whole Globe of Earth and Waters, and every part of it, not without juſt wonder and aſtoniſhment; the other Stars may have their ſeveral Vertues and Effects, but their marvellous remoteneſs, and my undiſcernable nothingneſs, may ſeem to forbid any certain intelligence of their diſtinct workings upon me: But whether theſe glorious Lights give, or take any notice of ſuch an imperceptible Mite as I; ſure I am, there is great reaſon I ſhould take notice of them; of their beauteous Luſtre, of their wonderful Magnitude, of their regular Motion; and be tranſported with admiration of that Omnipotent Power, Wiſdom, Providence, which created this goodly and mighty Hoſt of Heaven, and guides them in their conſtant March, without the leaſt deviation from their firſt ſetting out, to the laſt moment of their final Conflagration. O the narrowneſs of my wretched Heart, that affords not room enough for wonder at that which I cannot but ſee!

XXIII. It

XXIII.

It becomes not us to be niggarly where our Saviour intends Bounty: How glad ſhould we be rather to ampliate the benefit of the great Work of our Redeemer! but ſurely, I cannot ſee upon what Warrant that Favour is grounded, that enlargeth the Fruit of Chriſt's Redemption to the Angels: the good needed it not, the evil were not capable of it; only Mankind was captiv'd, and redeemable by that invaluable Ranſom.

Doubtleſs thoſe bleſſed Spirits have their part in the Joy and Gratulation of the infinite mercy of our Deliverance; for if they rejoyce at the Converſion of one Sinner, what triumph do we think there is in Heaven at the Univerſal Redemption of all Believers? The propriety of this Favour hath reaſon to engage us ſo much the more: Lord, thy Mercy is free, and boundleſs; thou wouldſt paſs by the lapſed Angels, and leave them in their Sin, and their Chains; and only reſcue miſerable Man out of their Hell. O for an Heart that might be in ſome meaſure anſwerable to ſo infinite Mercy; and that might

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might be no less captiv'd to thy Love, then it is freed by thy Redemption.

XXIV.

Men do commonly wrong themselves with a groundless expectation of good; fore-promising to themselves all fair terms in their proceedings, and all happy success in the issue; boding nothing to themselves but what they wish; even the Man after God's own Heart could say, Psal. 30. 6. *In my prosperity I said*, tush, *I shall never be removed*; wherein their misreckoning makes their disappointment so much the more grievous: Had not *David* made such account of the strength and stability of his Mountain, it could not have so much troubled him to have it levell'd with the Plain; on the contrary, the evils which we look for, fall so much the less heavily, by how much we are fore-prepared for their Entertainment; whatever by-accidents I may meet withal besides, I have two fixed Matches that I must inevitably incounter with, Age, and Death; the one is attended with many inconveniences, the other with much horror: let me not flatter my self with hopes of jollity,

and

and eaſe. My Comforts for Heaven ſhall (I truſt) never fail me; but for the preſent World, it ſhall be well for me, if I can without too much difficulty ſcramble out of the neceſſary miſeries of Life; and without too much ſorrow crawl to my Grave.

XXV.

Heaven hath many Tongues that talk of it, more Eyes to behold it, but few Hearts that rightly affect it: Ask any Chriſtian (eſpecially) whom ye ſhall meet with; he will tell you, thither he ſhapes his courſe; there he hath pitcht his hopes, and would think himſelf highly wronged by that Man, who ſhould make doubt of either his intereſt or ſpeed: But, if we ſhall caſt our Eyes upon the lives of Men, or they reflect their Eyes upon their own Boſoms, the Hypocracy will too palpably diſcover it ſelf: for ſurely, which way ſo ever the Faces look, the Hands and Feet of the moſt Men move Hell-ward: If Malice, Fraud, Cruelty, Oppreſſion, Injuſtice, Exceſs, Uncleanneſs, Pride, Contention, Covetouſneſs, Lyes, Hereſies, Blaſphemies; Diſobedience be the way thi-

thither, wo is me, how many walk in that wide and open Road to Deſtruction? but even there where the Heart pretends to Innocence, let a Man ſtrictly examine his own Affections, he ſhall find them ſo deeply earthed, that he ſhall be forced to confeſs his claim to Heaven is but faſhionable: Ask thy ſelf but this one Queſtion, O Man, whatſoever thou art, ask it ſeriouſly; Might I this very hour go to Heaven, am I willing and deſirous to make a preſent change of this Life for a better? and tell me ſincerely, what anſwer thou receiveſt from thine one Heart. Thy Judgment cannot but tell thee that the place is a thouſand times better; that the Condition would be infinitely advantagious, to exchange Baſeneſs for Glory, Miſery for Bleſſedneſs, Time for Eternity, a living Death, for a Life immortal: If thou do now fumble, and ſhuffle, and demur upon the Reſolution, be convinced of thine own Worldlineſs, and Infidelity; and know that if thy Heart had as much of Heaven as thy Tongue, thou couldſt not but ſay with the choſen Veſſel. Phil. 1. 23. *I deſire to depart hence, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.*

XXVI.

XXVI.

There is no earthly Pleaſure wherein we ſhall not ſoon grow weary; and be as willing to intermit, as ever we were to entertain it; and if the uſe of it continue, the very frequency makes it diſregarded; ſo as that which at firſt we eſteemed rare and precious, is now looked upon as common and deſpicable; and if it be ſuch, as that our impetuous Affection is too much tranſported with a preſent Fruition, we are ſo much the more diſtempered in the loſs: on the contrary, thoſe painful Yokes, which at the firſt impoſing ſeemed inſupportable. grow tolerable by cuſtom and long acquaintance; ſo as I know not how it comes to paſs, that time hath a contrary power, both to aggravate and lighten Evils: thoſe Pleaſures are only worthy to carry our Hearts, which are meaſured by no leſs than Eternity; and thoſe Pains moſt juſtly formidable which know neither end, nor Remiſſion.

XXVII.

XXVII.

The nearer our Saviour drew to his Glory. the more Humility he expreſſed: *Joh.* 13. 16. *Joh.* 15. 8. *Joh.* 15. 14. His Followers, were his Servants, and he their Maſter; then his Diſciples and he their Teacher; ſoon after they were his Friends, and he theirs; ſtraightways after his Reſurrection, and entrance into an immortal condition, they were his Brethren; Joh. 20. 17. *Go to my Brethren, and ſay unto them, I aſcend to my Father, and your Father.* Laſtly, they are incorporated into him, and made partakers of his Glory, Joh. 17. 21, 22, 23. *That they alſo may be one with us,* ſaith he, *I in them, and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one; and the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them.* O Saviour, was was this done for the depreſſing of thy ſelf, or for the exaltation of us; or rather for both? how couldſt thou more depreſs thy ſelf, than thus to match thy ſelf with us poor wretched Creatures? how couldſt thou more exalt us, than to raiſe us unto this entireneſs with thee the All-glorious, and eternal Son of God? how ſhould we learn

learn of thee to improve our higheſt a
vancement to our deepeſt humility, a
ſo to regard each other, that when we
greateſt, we ſhould be leaſt?

XXVIII.

How apt we are to miſconſtrue the S
rit of God, to our own diſadvantag
whiles the bleſſed Apoſtle bids us to wo
out our *ſalvation with fear and trembli*
he doth not bid us to work it out w
doubt and diſtruſt: *Pſal.* 2. It is t
Pſalmiſt's charge, that we ſhould ſer
the Lord with fear, and rejoice in hi
with trembling; ſo as there is a fe
without diffidence, and a trembling th
may conſiſt with Joy; trembling is
effect of fear, but this fear which we m
affect is reverential, not ſlaviſh, not d
ſtruſtful: Indeed, when we look up
our ſelves, and conſider our own Frailti
and Corruptions, and God's infinite juſtic
we have too juſt cauſe of doubt and de
ction, yes (were it not for better help
of utter diſpair; but when we caſt
our Eyes to the power of him that ha
undertaken for us, and the faithfulneſs
him that hath promiſed; and the ſu
me

mercies of him that hath begun his good work in us, we can fear with confidence, and rejoice in our trembling: For what are our Sins to his Mercies, our Unworthineſs to his infinite Merits, our Weakneſſes to his Omnipotence! I will therefore ſo diſtruſt my ſelf, that I will be ſtedfaſtly confident in the God of my Salvation; I will ſo tremble before the glorious Majeſty of my God, that I may not abate of the joy of his never-failing Mercy.

XXIX.

What a large and open Hand hath our God? how infinitely doth his bounty tranſcend not the practiſe only, but the admiration of Man? We think it well if upon often asking we can receive ſmall Favours: if after long delay, we can be gratified with a condeſcent; and if we have received one Courteſy, that is a bar to a ſecond; whereas our munificent God gives us not only what we ask, but what we ask not; and therefore before we ask: yea, it is he that gives us to ask, neither could we ſo much as crave good things, if he did not put into us thoſe holy

ly desires; yea, he not only gives
Blessings, before we ask; but he gives
the best things, a right to eternal Glor
before we are at all, yea, before t
World was: and as he prevents us
time, so he exceeds our thoughts in me
sure, giving us more than we ask: *R*
chel would have a Son; God gives h
two: *Abraham* sues that *Ishmael* may live
God gives him to prosper and to be t
Father of many Princes: Yet more,
gives us what we cannot ask. The dum
Demoniack could not sue for himself;
very silence was vocal, and receiv
what he would, and could not reque
yea lastly, which is the great improv
ment of his Mercy, he gives us agai
our asking; our ignorance sues agai
our selves, requiring hurtful things,
will not suffer our Hearts and Tongues
wrong us; but withholds what we
fitly crave, and gives us what we shou
and do not crave; as the fond Child c
to his Father for a Knife; he reaches h
a Spoon that may feed, and not h
him. O the Ocean of divine Boun
boundless, bottomless; O our wretch

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unworthineſs, if we be either niggardly to our ſelves in not asking bleſſings, or unthankful to our God in not acknowledging them!

XXX.

Infidelity and Faith look both through the ſame perſpective glaſs, but at contrary ends: Infidelity looks through the wrong end of the glaſs, and therefore ſees thoſe objects which are neer, afar off; and makes great things little; diminiſhing the greateſt ſpiritual Bleſſings; and removing far from us, threatned Evils: Faith looks at the right end, and brings the Bleſſings that are far off in time, cloſe to our eye; and multiplies Gods mercies which in a diſtance loſt their Greatneſs: Thus the Father of the faithful ſaw his ſeed poſſeſſed of the promiſed Land, when as yet he had no ſeed, nor was likely to have any; when the ſeed which he ſhould have, ſhould not enjoy it till after four hundred years; thus that good Patriark ſaw Chriſts day, and rejoyced: Thus our firſt Parent comforted himſelf after his ejection out of Paradiſe, with the foreſight of that bleſſed ſeed of the Woman, which ſhould

be exhibited almoſt four thouſand years after: ſtill, and ever, Faith is like it ſelf what uſe were there of that Grace, if did not fetch home to my eye things ſu ture, and inviſible?

That this diſſolved Body ſhall be raiſe out of the duſt, and enlived with this ver Soul wherewith it is now animated; an both of them put into a condition eternall glorious, is as clearly repreſented to m Soul in this glaſs, as if it were alread done. *Faithful is he that hath promiſe which will alſo do it.*

XXXI.

Who can think other then with ſcor of that baſe and unworthy conceit, whi hath been entertained by ſome, that o Saviour lived here on earth upon alm He that vouchſafed to take upon him t ſhape of a Servant, would have hated take upon him the trade of a Begge Service is a lawful calling; Beggery not he that gave life to all Creatures, co take a maintenance from them witho asking: he that did command the Fiſh bring the tribute money for himſelf a his Diſciples, and could multiply a f

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Loaves and Fiſhes for the relief of thouſands; could rather raiſe a ſuſtenance to himſelf, and his, than beg it: But here was neither need, nor cauſe; even ordinary means failed not; many wealthy followers, who had received cures and miraculous deliverances, *Luk.* 8. 2. (beſides heavenly doctrine) from him, miniſtred to him of their ſubſtance: neither was this out of Charity, but out of Duty; in the charge which he gave to his Diſciples (when he ſent them by pairs to Preach abroad) he tells them the labourer is worthy of his wages; and can we think this rule doth not much more hold concerning himſelf? had not himſelf and his family been furniſhed with a meet ſtock raiſed from hence; what purſe was it which *Judas* bore? and how could he be a theif in his office, if his Bags were empty? He therefore that could ſay, *It is a more bleſſed thing to give, than to receive*; certainly would not chuſe (when it was in his power) rather to receive than give: *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof*; and he diſtributes it as he pleaſeth,

amongſt the Children of men: For m
I hope I ſhall have the grace to be conte
with whatſoever ſhare ſhall fall to my l
but my prayer ſhall be that I may b
of none but God.

XXXII.

What a madneſs it is in us to preſum
on our intereſt in Gods favour, for the
curing of our ſinfulneſs from judgmen
The Angels were deeper in it than we m
tals can ever hope to be, in theſe hou
of clay; yet long ſince are ugly Devil
and they which enjoyed the liberty of
glorious Heavens, are now reſerved
everlaſting chains of darkneſs; And if
look down upon earth, what darling h
God in the world but *Iſrael*? This was
firſt born, his lot, his inheritance; of wh
he ſaid, *Here I have a delight to dwell.* A
now, where is it? O the woful deſolatio
of that ſelect people! What is it to tell
the ſubſtion of her Vineyards? *Pſa.* 80.
*Jer.*4.20. *Eſa.*1.7. *Pſ.* 89. 40. vaſtation
her Tents? the devouring of her Land
demolution of Walls? *Eſa.*27.11. breaki
down Altars? *Eſa.*13.16. burning of
ties? ſpoyling of Houſes? daſhing in p

ces their Children, raviſhing their Wives,
*Pſ.*78.84. killing of their prieſts, *Lam.*2.26.
eating of their own Children of but a ſpan
long, and a thouſand ſuch woful ſymp-
tomes of War: the Pſalmiſt hath ſaid a
word for all (in a juſt, but contrary ſenſe)
Deſtructions are come to a perpetual end;
what deſtruction can be more, when there
is no *Iſrael*? How is that wretched Nation
vaniſhed no man knows whither! ſo as it
was *Jezebels* curſe that nothing was left,
whereof it could be ſaid, this was *Jezebel*.
So there is not one peece of a man left in
all the world, of whom we can ſay: This
was one of the Tribes of *Iſrael*: as for
thoſe famous Churches, which were, (ſince
that) honoured with the Preaching, and
Pens of the bleſſed Apoſtles, where are
they now to be lookt for, but amongſt the
rubbiſh of curſed *Mahumetiſm*? O that we
could not be high-minded, but fear.

XXXIII.

What a woful converſion is here? The
ſting of death is ſin; and the ſting of ſin
is death; both meet in man, to make him
perfectly miſerable; Death could not
have ſtung us; no, could not have

been at all, if it had not been for sin. And sin, though in it self extreamly hei nous yet were not so dreadful, and ho rible, if it were not attended with Dea How do we owe our selves to the mer of a Saviour, that hath freed us from t evil of both; having pulled out the stin of Death which is sin, and that it cann hurt us; and having taken such ord with the sting of sin, which is death, th instead of hurting, it shall turn benefic al to us: Lord, into what a safe conditio hast thou put us? If neither sin, nor dea can hurt us, what should we fear?

XXXIV.

How unjustly hath the presumption Blasphemous Cavillers been wont to c the envy of their Condemnation meer upon the absolute will of an unrespecti Power, as if the Damnation of the Cre ture were only of a Supream Will, n of a just Merit; the very name of Ju stice convinces them; a punitive Justi cannot but suppose an offence: It is n for us to rack the Brains, and strain th Heart-strings of plain honest Christian with the subtilties of distinctions, of a n

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gative and reprobation, of cauſes and conſequences; truths meet for the Schools; It is enough that all Chriſtian Divines; the Synods both of *Dort* and *Trent* agree in this Truth; that never man is, was, can be miſerable but for ſin, yea, for his own ſin; The Prophet tells us ſo in terms, Lam. 3. 39. *Why is the living man ſorrowful, man ſuffereth for his ſin:* Nothing can be more true than that of *Bildad* the *Shuhite*, Job 8. 20. *Behold God will not caſt away a perfect man: thy perdition is of thy ſelf, O Iſrael.* It is no leſs than rank Blaſphemy to make God the Author of Sin, Pſal. 5. 4. *Thou art the God that haſt no pleaſure in wickedneſs, neither ſhall any evil dwell with thee,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt; our ſin is our own, and the wages of ſin is death; he that doth the work earns the wages; ſo then the righteous God is cleared both of our ſin, and our death; only his Juſtice pays us what we will needs deſerve, Ezek. 18. 23. *Have I any pleaſure at all* (ſaith he) *that the wicked ſhould die, and not that he ſhould return from his ways and live? wherefore return ye and live.* What a wretched thing is a wilful

Sinner that will needs be guilty of his own Death? Nothing is more odious amongſt Men, than for a Man to be a Felon of himſelf; beſides the forfeiture of his Eſtate, Chriſtian Burial is denied him and he is caſt forth into the High-way with a Stake pitcht through his Body, ſo as every Paſſenger that ſees that woful Monument is ready to ſay: There lyes the Carcaſs, but where is the Soul?

But ſo much more heinous is the ſelf-Felony of a wilful Sinner, becauſe it is immediately acted upon the Soul; and carries him with pleaſure in the ways of an Eternal Death. Pſal. 19. 12, 13. *O Lord, cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults; keep thy Servant alſo from preſumptuous Sins leſt they get the dominion over me.*

XXXV.

We are wont to ſay, That we ought to give even the Devil his due; and ſurely it is poſſible for us to wrong that malignant Spirit, in caſting upon him thoſe evils which are not properly his: It is true, that he is the Tempter; and both injects evil Motions, and draws them forth into act: but yet, all ill is not immediately his

his; we have enough beſides, of our own: Jam. 1. 14, 15. *Every Man*, ſaith St. *James*, *is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Luſt, and enticed; then when Luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin when it is finiſhed bringeth forth Death*; Lo, both the Luſt, and the Seducement are our own; the Sin is ours, the Death ours: There are indeed diabolical Suggeſtions which are immediately caſt into us by that wicked one; but there are carnal Tentations that are raiſed out of our own corrupt Nature; theſe need not his immediate Hand; he was the main Agent in our depravation; but being once depraved we can act evil of our ſelves; And if Satan be the Father of Sin, our Will is the Mother; and Sin is the curſed Iſſue of both: He could not make our Sin without our Selves; we concur to our own undoing: It was the charge of the Apoſtle, That we ſhould not give place to the Devil; Lo, he could not take it, unleſs we gave it; our will betrays us to his Tyranny; in vain ſhall we cry out of the malice and fraud of wicked Spirits, whiles we nouriſh their complices in our Boſoms.

XXXVI.

I cannot but think with what unſpeakable Joy old *Simeon* died, when, after long waiting for the conſolation of *Iſrael*, he had now ſeen, the Lord's *Chriſt*; when I hear him ſay, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy Word, for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.* Methinks I ſhould ſee his Soul ready to fly out of his Mouth in an heavenly raviſhment; and even then upon its Wing towards its Glory; for now his Eyes ſaw, and his Arms embraced, in God's Salvation, his own; in *Iſraels* Glory, his own. How gladly doth he now ſee Death, when he hath the Lord of Life in his Boſom? or how can he wiſh to cloſe up his Eyes with any other Object? yet when I have ſeriouſly conſidered it, I cannot ſee wherein our condition comes ſhort of his: he ſaw the Child Jeſus but in his Swathing-Bands, when he was but now entring upon the great work of our Redemption; we ſee him, after the full accompliſhment of it, glorioufly triumphing in Heaven; He ſaw him but buckling on his Armour, and entring into the Liſts; we ſee him victorious, Iſa. 63. 1. *Who is*

this that cometh from Edom *with dyed Garments from* Bozra ; *this that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, mighty to ſave ?* He could only ſay, Iſa. 9. 6. *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given :* We can ſay, *Thou haſt aſcended on high, thou haſt led captivity captive , thou haſt received gifts for Men , Pſ.* 68. 18. It is true, the difference is, he ſaw his Saviour with bodily Eyes, we with mental; but the Eyes of our Faith are no leſs ſure and unfailing, than thoſe of Senſe : Lord, why ſhould not I, whoſe Eyes have no leſs ſeen thy Salvation, ſay, Now let thy Servant depart, not in Peace only, but in a joyful ſenſe of my inſtant Glory.

XXXVII.

When I think on my Saviour in his Agony, and on his Croſs, my Soul is ſo clouded with Sorrow, as if it would never be clear again : thoſe bloudy drops, and thoſe dreadful ejaculations (methinks) ſhould be paſt all reach of Comfort : but when I ſee his happy eluctation out of theſe pangs, and hear him cheerfully rendring his Spirit into the Hands of his Father ; when I find him trampling upon his Grave,

Grave, attended with glorious Angels and aſcending in the Chariot of a Cloud to his Heaven; I am ſo elevated with Joy, as that I ſeem to have forgotten there was ever any cauſe of grief in thoſe ſufferings. I could be paſſionate to think O Saviour, of thy bitter and ignominious Death, and moſt of all, of thy vehement ſtruglings with thy Fathers wrath for my ſake, but thy conqueſt and glory take me off, and calls me to Hallelujahs of Joy and Triumph; Revel. 5. 13. *Bleſſing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

XXXVIII.

It is not hard to obſerve that the more holy any perſon is, the more he is afflicted with others ſin: *Lot* vexed his righteous ſoul with the unclean converſation of the *Sodomites*; *Davids* eyes guſh'd out Rivers of Water, becauſe men kept not the Law; Thoſe that can look with dry and undiſpleaſed Eyes upon anothers ſin, never truly mourned for their own: Had they obhorred ſin, as ſin, the offence of a God would have been grievous to them

them in whomſoever: It is a godleſs heart, that doth not find it ſelf concerned in Gods quarrel; and that can laugh at that, which the God of Heaven frowns at; my ſoul is neareſt to me, my ſorrow therefore for my ſin muſt begin at home, but it may not reſt there; from thence it ſhall diffuſe it ſelf all the World over: 2 Cor. 11. 29. *Who is offended, and I burn not?* who offendeth, and I weep not?

XXXIX.

The world little conſiders the good advantage that is made of ſins: ſurely the whole Church of God hath reaſon to bleſs God for *Thomas* his unbelief, not in the act, which was odious (after ſo good aſſurances) but in the iſſue: his doubt proves our evidence; and his confeſſion (after his touch had convinced him) was more noble, than his incredulity was ſhameful. All his attendance upon Chriſt had not taught him ſo much Divinity, as this one touch: Often had he ſaid, my Lord, but never my God, till now: Even *Peters* confeſſion (though rewarded with the change of his name) came ſhort of this: The flame that is beaten down by

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the blaſt of the bellows, riſes higher than otherwiſe it would; and the ſpring water that runs level in the Plain, yet if it fall low, it will therefore riſe high; the ſhaken tree roots the deeper: Not that we *ſhould ſin that grace may abound, God forbid*; he can never hope to be good that will be therefore ill, that he may be the better: but that our holy zeal ſhould labour to improve our miſcarriages to our ſpiritual gain, and the greater glory of that Majeſty whom we have offended: To be bettered by grace it is no maſtery; but to raiſe more holineſs out of ſin, is a noble imitation of that holy God, who brings light out of darkneſs, life out of death.

XL.

Every man beſt knows his own complaints, we look upon the outſides of many, whom we think happy; who in the mean time are ſecretly wrung with the inward ſenſe of their own concealed ſorrows, and under a ſmooth and calm countenance ſmother many a Tempeſt in their boſom. There are thoſe, whoſe Faces ſmile, whiles their Conſcience gripes them cloſely within; There are thoſe that can diſſemble their Poverty, and Domeſtick

ſtick vexations, reſerving their ſighs till their back be turned; that can pick their teeth abroad, when they are faſting, and hungry at home: and many a one forces a ſong when his heart is heavy: No doubt *Naomi* made many a ſhort meal after her return to *Bethlehem*, yet did not whine to her great kindred in a bemoaning of her want: And good *Hannah* bit in many a grief, which her inſulting Rival might not ſee: On the contrary, there are many whom we pity as miſerable, that laugh in their ſleeve, and applaud themſelves in their ſecret felicity, and would be very loath to exchange conditions with thoſe that commiſerate them: A ragged Cynick likes himſelf at leaſt as well as a great *Alexander*. The mortified Chriſtian that knows both worlds, looks with a kind of contented ſcorn upon the proud Gallant that contemns him; as feeling that heaven within him, which the other is not capable to believe.

It is no judging of mens real eſtate by their ſemblance, not valuing others worth by our own rate: And for our ſelves, if we have once laid ſure grounds of our own

own inward contentment and happineſs, it matters not greatly if we be misknown of the world.

XLI.

For one man to give titles to another is ordinary; but for the great God to give titles to a poor wretched man is no leſs than wonderful: Thus doth the Lord to *Job*; *There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man*: O what muſt he needs be, in whom his maker glories! Lo, who would have looked for a Saint in ſo obſcure a corner of the Eaſt, and in ſo dark a time, before ever the Law gave light to the World? yet even then the land of *Uz* yields a *Job*; no time, no place can be any bar to an infinite mercy: Even this while, for ought I ſee, the Sun ſhined more bright in *Midian* than in *Goſhen*: Gods election will be ſure to find out his own any where out of hell; and if they could be there, even there alſo: Amongſt all thoſe idolatrous heathen, *Job* is perfect and upright; his Religion and integrity is ſo much the more glorious, becauſe it is ſo ill Neighboured; as ſome rich Diamond is ſet off by a dark foyl. O

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the infinite goodneſs of the Almighty that picks out ſome few grains out of the larg Chaff-heap of the World, which he reſerves for the granary of a bleſſed Immortality: It is not of him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy.

We might well imagine that ſuch a ſprig muſt ſprout out of the ſtock of faithful *Abraham*; what other loyns were likely to yield ſo holy an iſſue? And if his *Sarah* muſt be the mother of the promiſed ſeed, yet why might he not alſo raiſe a bleſſed ſeed from *Keturah*? The birth doth not always follow the belly: even this ſecond brood yields an heir of his fathers faith: it is ſaid, *Gen.* 25. 6. That *to the ſons of the Concubines Abraham gave gifts, and ſent them away to the Eaſt*; Surely this Son of the Concubine carries away as rich a legacy of his Fathers grace as ever was enjoyed by the Son of the promiſe at home.

The gifts that *Abraham* gave to *Midian*, where nothing to thoſe gifts, which the God of *Abraham* gives to this ſon of *Midian*; *who was perfect and upright, one that*

that feared God and eſchewed evil. I perceive the holy and wiſe God meant to make this man a pattern as of Patience, ſo of all heavenly Vertues; he could not be fit for that uſe, if he were not exquiſite; and what can be wanting to that man, of whom God holily boaſts that he is perfect?

And now what mettal is ſo fit to challenge the fire of affliction as this pure gold? and who is ſo fit a match for the great Adverſary as this Champion of God? Never had he been put upon ſo hard a combat, if God had not well known both the ſtrength that he had given him, and the happy ſucceſs of his conflict: little doth that good man know what wager is laid on his head, but ſtrongly incounters all his Tryals: The *Sabeans* have bereft him of his Oxen; the *Chaldees* of his Camels; the fire from Heaven of his Sheep; the tempeſt of his Children; Satan of his Health; and had not his wife been left to him for his greateſt croſs, and his friends for his further tormentors, I doubt whether they had eſcaped.

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Lo, there ſits the great Potentate of the Eaſt, naked and forlorn in the aſhes; as deſtitute of all comforts, as full of painful boyls and botches; ſcraping his loathſome hide with a potſheard; yet even in that woful poſture poſſeſſing his ſoul in patience, maintaining his innocence, juſtifying his Maker, cheering himſelf in his Redeemer, and happily triumphing over all his miſeries, and at laſt made the great mirror of divine bounty to all generations: Now muſt *Job* pray for his friendly perſecutors, and is ſo high in favour with God, that it is made an argument of extream wrath againſt *Iſrael*; that though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were in the land, they ſhould deliver none but their own ſouls: O God, this Saint could not have had this ſtrength of invincible patience without thee: thou that rewardeſt it in him, didſt beſtow it upon him: it is thy great Mercy to Crown thine own works in us: thy gifts are free, thou canſt fortifie even my weak ſoul with the ſame powers, ſtrengthen me with the ſame grace, and impoſe what thou wilt.

XLII.

XLII.

As it ſhall be once in glory, ſo it is in grace, there are degrees of it: The Apoſtle that ſaid of his Auditors, they have received the holy Ghoſt as well as we; did not ſay, they have received the holy Ghoſt as much as we: We know the Apoſtles had ſo much as to give it to others; none beſides them could do ſo. It is an happy thing to have any quantity of true ſanctifying grace at all; every drop of water is water, and every grain of gold is gold, every meaſure of grace is precious. But who is there that when he is dry would take up with one drop of liquor when he might have more? or is covetouſly minded, would ſit down content with one dram of gold? in ſuch caſes a little doth but draw on a deſire of more: it is ſtrange to ſee that in all other commodities we deſire a fulneſs: If God give us fruit of our bodies, it contents us not to have an imperfect child, but we wiſh it may have the full ſhape and proportion: and, when God hath anſwered us in that, we do not reſt in the integrity of parts, but deſire that it may attain to

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a fulneſs of underſtanding, and of ſtature; and then laſtly to a fulneſs of Age: We would have full diſhes, full cups, full cofers, full barns; a fulneſs of all things, ſave the beſt of all, which is, the holy Ghoſt. Any meaſure of ſpiritual grace contents us; ſo as we are ready to ſay with *Eſau: I have enough my brother.* There is a ſinful kind of contentation, wherewith many faſhionable Chriſtians ſuffer themſelves to beguiled, to the utter undoeing of their ſouls: for hereupon they grow utterly careleſs to get, what they think they have already: who cares to eat that is full cramed? and by this means they live and die graceleſs: for had they ever taſted how ſweet the Lord is in the Graces of his holy Spirit, they could never think they had enough; and whiles they do think ſo, they are utterly uncapable of either having, or deſiring more: As there is a ſinful; ſo there is an holy covetouſneſs, which the more it hath, the more it affects: Lord make me thus covetous, and I cannot chuſe but be rich.

XLIII.

XLIII.

What a marvellous familiarity was this which *Moſes* had with God: Exod. 33.11 *That the Lord ſpake unto Moſes, face to face, as a man ſpeaketh to his friend!* and yet more, that *Moſes* ſo ſpake to God! what a bold and high requeſt was that which *Moſes* made to God? *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory*, that is (as it is there interpreted) *thy face*! that face which no man might ſee and live; Lo, God had immediately before ſpoken to *Moſes* even to his face, out of the cloudy pillar; that doth not ſatisfie his holily-ambitious ſoul: but, as he heard the Voice, ſo he muſt ſee the Face of the Almighty: That cloudy pillar did ſufficiently repreſent unto him the preſence of the great God of *Iſrael*; yet ſtill he ſues for a ſight of his Glory: This is no pattern for fleſh and bloud; far be from our thoughts to aſpire ſo high: *Thy face, O God, will we ſeek*: but in thy bleſſed ordinances, not in thy glorious and incomprehenſible eſſence: It is not for me as yet to preſume ſo far as to deſire to ſee that infinite light which thou art, or that light wherewith thou art cloathed, or that

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light inacceſſible wherein thou dwelleſt: Only, now ſhew me the light of thy countenance in grace, and prepare my ſoul for that light of glory: when I ſhall ſee as I am ſeen.

XLIV.

In the waters of life, the divine Scriptures, there are ſhallows, and there are deeps; ſhallows where the Lamb may wade, and deeps where the Elephant may ſwim: If we be not wiſe to diſtinguiſh, we may eaſily miſcarry: he that can wade over the ford, cannot ſwim through the deep; and if he miſtake the paſſage, he drowns: What infinite miſcheif hath ariſen to the Church of God from the preſumption of ignorant and unlettered men, that have taken upon them to interpret the moſt obſcure Scriptures, and pertinaciouſly defended their own ſenſe? How contrary is this to all practiſe in whatſoever vocation? In the Taylors trade, every man can ſtitch a ſeame, but every man cannot cut out a garment: In the Saylers Art, every one may be able to pull at a Cable, but every one cannot guide the Helm: In the Phyſitians profeſſion, every

goſſip

goſſip can give ſome ordinary Receits u
on common experience; but to finde t
nature of the Diſeaſe, and to preſcri
proper Remedies from the juſt groun
of Art, is proper to the profeſſors
that Science; and we think it abſu
and dangerous to allow every ignora
Mountebank to practiſe: In matter
Law, every plain Countrey man kno
what belongs to diſtraining, impoundi
replevying; but to give ſound counſel
a Clyent in a point of difficulty, to dra
firm conveyances; to plead effectuall
and to give ſound judgment is the hard
caſes, is for none but Barriſters, and Be
chers: And ſhall we think it ſafe that
Divinity, which is the Miſtreſs of all Sc
ences, and in matters which may conce
the eternal ſafety of the Soul, every ma
ſhould take upon him to ſhape his ow
coat, to ſteer his own way, to give h
own doſe, to put and adjudg his own cas
The old words was, that Artiſts are wo
thy to be truſted in th ir own trade
Wherefore hath God given to men ski
in Arts and Tongues? Wherefore do th
apteſt Wits ſpends their times and ſtudi

fro

from their infancy upon theſe ſacred imployments, if men altogether inexpert in all the grounds, both of art and language can be able to paſs as ſound a judgment in the depths of Theological truths, as they? How happy were it, if we could all learn (according to that word of the Apoſtle) to keep our ſelves within our own line: As Chriſtians, the Scriptures are ours; but to uſe, to enjoy, to read, to hear, to learn, to meditate, to practiſe, not to interpret according to our private conceit; for this faculty we muſt look higher. *The Prieſts lips are to preſerve knowledg: and they ſhall ſeek the Law at his mouth: for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts.* Mal. 2. 7.

XLV.

When we ſee the year in his prime and pride, decked with beautiful bloſſoms, and all goodly varieties of flowers, cheered with the Muſick of birds, and ſtated in a ſweet and moderate temper of heat and cold; how glad we are that we have made ſo good an exchange for an hard and chilling Winter; and how ready we could be to wiſh that this pleaſant and

happy ſeaſon might laſt all the year long? But herein (were our deſires ſatisfied) we ſhould wiſh to our own great diſadvantage: for if the ſpring were not followed with an intenſion of Summer heat, thoſe fruits, whoſe hopes we ſee in the bud and flower, could never come to any perfection: and even that ſucceeding fervor, if it ſhould continue long, would be no leſs prejudicial to the health and life of all creatures; and if there were not a relaxation of that vigorous heat in Autumn, ſo as the ſap returns back into the root, we could never look to ſee but one years fruits. And thus alſo it is ſpiritually: if our proſperity were not intermixed with viciſſitudes of croſſes; if the lively beams of grace were not ſometimes interchanged with could deſertion we ſhould never know what belongs to ſpiritual life: What ſhould we do then but be both patient of and thankful for our changes; and make no account of any conſtancy, till we attain to the Region of reſt and bleſſedneſs?

XL

XLVI.

What fools doth the devil make of thoſe men, which would fain otherwiſe be accounted wiſe? who would think that men could be ſo far forſaken of their reaſon, as to fall down before thoſe ſtocks and ſtones which their own hands had carved; to guide their enterpriſes by the fond auguries of the flying, or poſture, or noyſe of fowls, or the inſpection of the entrails of beaſts; to tye the confidence of their ſucceſs to certain ſcrawls, and characters which themſelves have deviſed: to read their own or other fortunes in their hands or ſtars: to ſuffer themſelves mocked with deceitful viſions; neither are his ſpiritual deluſions leſs groſs and palpable; wiſe *Solomon* ſpeaks of the wickedneſs of folly; *Eccleſ.* 7.25. and we may no leſs truly invert it; the folly of wickedneſs, the fool, ſaith our Saviour, Matth.7.26. *builds his houſe upon the ſand*, 1 Tim.6.17. ſo as it may be waſht away with the next waves; what other doth the fooliſh worldling, that builds all his hopes upon uncertain riches, momentary pleaſures, deceitful favours? *Heb.* 11. 25. *Prov.*

31.30. *Eccleſ.*2.14. *Eccleſ.* 10. 15. *The fool* (ſaith *Solomon*) *walketh in darkneſs*, the ſinner walk in the darkneſs of ignorance, through the works of darkneſs, to the pit of darkneſs: The fool, ſaith the Preacher, knows not the way into the City: The worldling may perhaps hit the way through the golden gates of honour; or down to the Mines of wealth; or to the flowry garden of pleaſure; but the way of true peace he knows not: he no more knows the way to Heaven, than if there were none: *The fool* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God*; Did not the wicked man ſay ſo, he durſt not wilfully ſin in the face of ſo mighty and dreadful an avenger. Laſtly, the fool is apt to part with his patrimony for ſome gay toys: and how ready is the carnal heart to caſt away the Favour of God, the inheritance of Heaven, the ſalvation of his ſoul, for theſe vain earthly trifles? Holy men are wont to paſs with the world for Gods fools; alas, how little do theſe cenſurers know to paſs a true judgment of wiſdom and folly? he that was rapt into the third

Heaven,

Heaven, tells us, 1 Cor. 1. 25. That *the foolishness of God is wiser then men, and the weakness of God stronger then men*; but this we are sure of, that wicked men are the devils fools? *Pro.* 19. 29. and that *judgments are prepared for scorners and stripes for the back of fools.*

XLVII.

There are some things which are laudable in man, but cannot be incident into God; as a bashful shamefastness, and holy fear: And there are some dispositions blame-worthy in men, which are yet, in a right sense, holily ascribed unto God, as unchangeableness, and irrepentance: Attributes and qualities receive their limitations according to the meet subjects to which they belong; with this sure rule That whatsoever may import an infinite purity and perfection, we have reason to ascribe to our Maker, whatever may argue infirmity, misery, corruption, we have reason to take to our selves: neither is it otherwise in the condition of men: One mans vertue is anothers vice; so boldness in a woman, bashfulness in an old man, bounty in a poor man, parsimony in the great, are as foully unbeseeming, as boldness

neſs in a Souldier, baſhfulneſs in a child, bounty in the rich, parſimony in the poor, are juſtly commendable. It is not enough for us to know what is good in itſelf, but what is proper for us: elſe we may be blemiſhed with that which is another's honour.

XLVIII.

It is eaſy to obſerve that there are five degrees of the digeſtion of our ſpiritual food: Firſt it is received into the cell of the ear, and there digeſted by a careful attention; then it is conveyed into the brain, and there concocted by due meditation, from thence it is ſent down into the heart, and there digeſted by the affections; and from thence it is conveyed to the tongue, in conference, and holy confeſſion; and laſtly, it is thence tranſmitted to the hand, and there receives perfect digeſtion, in our action and performance. And as the life and health of the body cannot be maintained, except the material food paſs through all the degrees of bodily concoction, no more can the ſoul live and proſper in the want of theſe ſpiritual degrees of digeſtion; And as where

where the food is Perfectly concocted, the body grows fat and vigorous; ſo is it with the ſoul, where the ſpiritual repaſt is thus kindly digeſted: Were there not failings in all theſe degrees, the ſouls of men would not be ſo meager and unthriving as they are. Some there are that will not give ſo much as ear-room to the word of truth; ſuch are willing recuſants: others will admit it perhaps ſo far, but there let it reſt; theſe are faſhionable Auditors: ſome others can be content to let it enter into the brain, and take up ſome place in their thoughts and memories; theſe are ſpeculative Profeſſors; ſome (but fewer) others let it down into their hearts, and there entertain it with ſecret liking, but hide it in their boſoms, not daring to make profeſſion of it to the world: Theſe are cloſe Nicodemians; others take it into their mouths, and buſie their tongues in holy chat, yet do nothing; theſe are formal diſcourſers: but alas, how few are there whoſe hands ſpeak louder than their tongues: That conſcionably hear, meditate, affect, ſpeak, do the word of their Maker, and Redeemer?

XLIX.

Men that are in the ſame condition ſpeed not always alike: *Barabbas* was a thief, murderer, ſeditionary, and deſerved hanging no leſs than the two thieves that were crucified with our Saviour, yet he is diſmiſſed, and they excuted; And even of theſe two (as our Saviour ſaid of the two woman grinding at the mill) one was taken, the other refuſed; one went before *Peter* to Paradiſe, the other went before *Judas* into hell: The providence and election of a God may make a difference: we have no reaſon in the ſame crime, to preſume upon a contrary iſſue: If that gracious hand ſhall exempt us from the common judgment of our conſorts in evil, we have cauſe to bleſs his mercy; but if his juſt hand ſhall ſweep us away in the company of our wicked conſociates, we have reaſon to thank none but our ſelves for our ſufferings.

L.

How ſweet a thing is revenge to us naturally? even the very infant rejoyces to ſee him beaten that hath angerd him, and is ready with his little hand to give that

that ſtroke to the by-ſtander, which he would have with more force returned to the offender; and how many have we known in mortal quarrels cheerfully bleeding out their laſt drop, when they have ſeen their enemy gaſping, and dying before them: This alone ſhews how much there is remaining in our boſom of the ſting of that old Serpent, who was a murderer from the beginning, delighting in death, and enjoying our torment; whereas, on the contrary, true grace is merciful, ready to forgive, apt to return good for evil, to pray for our perſecutors; Col. 3. 13. Nothing doth more clearly evince what ſpirit we are of, than our diſpoſition in wrongs received: The carnal heart breathes nothing but revenge, and is ſtreight wringing the ſword out of the hands of him that hath ſaid, Rom. 12. 19. *Vengeance is mine:* Deut. 32. 35. The regenerate ſoul, contrarily, gives place to wrath, and *puts on the bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long ſuffering, forbearing, forgiving*, Col. 3. 12, 13. and will not *be overcome with evil, but overcomes evil with good*, Rom. 12.

21. We have ſo much of God, as we can remit injuries; ſo much of Satan, as we would revenge them.

L I.

It is worth obſerving how nature hath taught all living Creatures to be their own Phyſitians; The ſame power that gave them a being hath led them to the means of their own preſervation: No *Indian* is ſo ſalvage, but that he knows the uſe of his Tobacco and Contra-yerva; yea even the brute Creatures are bred with this skill: The Dog when he is ſtomack-ſick can go right to his proper Graſs; the Cat to her Nep; the Goat to his Hemlock; the Weaſel to Rue; the Hart to Dittany; the ſick Lyon can cure himſelf with an Ape; the Monkey with a Spider; the Bear with an Ant-heap; the Panther with mans dung; and the Stork is ſaid to have taught man the uſe of the Glyſter; to what purpoſe ſhould we inſtance when the caſe is univerſal? The Toad hath recourſe to his Plantain-leaf; the Tortoiſe to his Peni-royal: and in ſhort, there is none but knows his own Medicine. All for the reaſonable Creature, in all the

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vilized regions of the world, we may well ſay now of every nation as it was of old ſaid of *Egypt*, That it is a Country of Phyſitians: There is not an huſwife, but hath an Apothecaries ſhop in her Garden, which affords her thoſe receipts, whereby ſhe heals the ayls of her complaining family. Only mankind is mortally ſoulſick, and naturally neither knows, nor feels, nor cares for remedy. O thou that art the great Phyſitian in Heaven, firſt cure our inſenſibleneſs; make thou us as ſick of our ſins, as we have made our ſelves ſick by ſin, and then ſpeak the word, and we ſhall be whole.

LII.

When I conſider the precious ornaments of the high Prieſt, the rich Fabrick and furniture of the Tabernacle, the bountiful gifts which the Princes of the Tribes offered at the dedication of the Altar, *Numb.* 8. I cannot but think what a maſs of wealth *Iſrael* brought with them out of *Egypt*; theſe treaſures grew not in the wildnerneſs; neither did *Jacob* and his ſons bring them out of *Canaan*; they were gathered in their *Goſhen*: It was an hard

hard bondage under which *Israel* was held by the latter *Pharaohs*; yet, as it then, instead of the furnaces of Bricks, they had been labouring in the Silver Mines, to their own advantage, they came out laden with precious mettals: What should I say to this? God said, *Israel is my first born*, and the first born was to have a double portion: What was *Israel* but a type of Gods Church? now the Church of God may be held down with cruel tyranny; but in spight of all opposition it will thrive; And *though they have lien among the pots, yet shall they be as the wings of a Dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold*; Psal. 68. 13. And if the Spouse of Christ shall be stripped of her outward Ornaments; *yet the Kings Daughter is all-glorious within*; rich in those heavenly endowments of Grace and holiness, which shall make her dear and lovely in the eyes of her celestial Bride-groom; shortly, the Church may be impaired in her external estate; but if, the while, she gathers so much the more of those better treasures; what hath she lost? *Godliness is great gain with*

conten-

contentment; If she have less of the world and more of God, what cause can she have of complaint, or her enemies of insultation?

LIII.

He that is a God of Order loves both to set, and keep it; For the service of his Sanctuary he appointed several offices, and in those offices several degrees; none of those might enterfer with others: The Levites might not medle with the Priests charge; nor one degree of Levites with another: The Porters might not thrust in amongst the Singers, though perhaps some of their voyces might be more tuneable; neither might the Singers change places with the Porters: The sons of *Merari*, that were to carry the boards, bars, *Numb.* 4. 29. 23. and pillars of the Tabernacle, and the Court, might not change with the sons of *Gershon*, *Num* 4. 15. for the more holy load of the vessels of the Sanctuary, committed to the sons of *Kohath*: Neither might the sons of *Kohath* so much as goin to see the covering of those sacred utensils by *Aaron*, and his sons; *Numb.* 4. 10. upon no less pain than death:

death: So punctual was God in ſetting every man his proper ſtation; and holding him to it, without either neglect or change: And why ſhould we think God leſs curious in his Evangelical Church? It was the charge of him, who next under the Almighty, had the marſhalling of the Church of the *Gentiles*; *Let every man abide in the ſame calling, wherein he was called*, Perhaps there may be a better head for policy upon Plebeian ſhoulders than the Governors: ſhall that man leave his rank, and thruſt into the chair of Government? Neither is it other in ſpiritual offices; It is no thinking that the wiſe and holy God will be pleaſed with a wel-meant confuſion: For all our imployments in the ſervice of the Almighty, we muſt conſult not with our abilities, but with our vocation.

LIIII.

I ſee too many men willing to live to no purpoſe; caring only to be rid of time on what terms ſoever, making it the only ſcope of their life to live, A diſpo-

ſition

ſition that may well befit brute Creatures which are not capable of any other aym ſave meerly their own preſervation: but for men that enjoy the Priviledg of Reaſon, for Chriſtians that pretend a title to Religion, too baſe and unworthy; where God hath beſtowed theſe higher faculties, he looks for other improvements; For what a poor thing is it only to live? a thing common to us, with the moſt deſpiſed vermin, that breeds on our own corruption: but to live for ſome more excellent ends, is that which Reaſon ſuggeſts, and Religion perfits: Here then are divers ſubordinations of ends, whereof one make way for another, and all for the Supream. We labour and exerciſe that we may eat, we eat that we may live, and maintain health and ſtrength; we deſire health and ſtrength that we may do good to our ſelves and many; that we may be able to do ſervice to God, King, and Countrey; and therein, we drive at the teſtimony of a good Conſcience, approving to God our holy deſires, and endeavours; and in all theſe, at the glory and ſalvation of our ſouls; and laſtly, in that

as

as the higheſt of all ends, at the glory of our bleſſed Creator and Redeemer: This is indeed to live: otherwiſe, we may have a being for a time upon earth, but a life I cannot call it; and when we muſt ceaſe to be, we are neceſſarily ſwallowed up with the horror of either not being at all, or of being eternally miſerable.

L V.

All our love is moved from ſome good which we apprehend in the party loved; carnal love from beauty; worldly from gain; ſpiritual from grace; divine, from infinite goodneſs: It muſt needs be therefore, that when the ground and motive of our love faileth, the affection it ſelf muſt ceaſe; thoſe that are enamoured of a beautiful face, find their paſſion cooled with a loathſome deformity; thoſe that are led by the hopes of profit, like waſps, leave buzzing about the gally-pot, when all the honey is gone; thoſe that could carry the rod familiarly in their hand, run from it when they ſee it turn'd to a Serpent: Contrarily, when that which attracts our love is conſtant to it ſelf, and everlaſting, the affection ſet upon it is per-

permanent, and eternal: If than I love God for riches, for preferment, for my own indempnity; when intervening croſſes ſtrip me of the hopes of all theſe, I ſhall be ready to ſay, with that diſtempered King of *Iſrael*: 2 Kin. 6.33. *Behold, this evil is of the Lord, What ſhould I wait on the Lord any longer?* If my reſpects to my Saviour be for the Loaves, and Fiſhes; my heart is carried away with thoſe baskets of fragments: but if I can love God for his goodneſs ſake, *Cant.* 8. 6. this love ſhall outlaſt time; and overmatch death.

LVI.

What a wretched narrowneſs of heart is this which I find in my ſelf; that when I may have all things, I take up with nothing; and when I may be poſſeſſed of an infinite good, I pleaſe my ſelf in graſping a little thick clay? It was a large word that the Apoſtle ſaid to his Corrinthians; 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Whether Paul or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things preſent, or things to come, all are yours.* What, ſhall we think they were richer than their neighbours? or is not this the condition of all thoſe, of whom

whom he can ſay in the next words, *ye are Chriſts?* There, there comes in all our right to this infinite wealth; of our ſelves we are beggars; in him, who is Lord of all, we are feoffed in all things; for whiles he ſaith, *All are yours, and ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods*; he doth in effect ſay, Chriſt is yours, and in him God is yours; for this right is mutual. How elſe ſhould all things be ours, if God were not ours, without whom all is nothing; and how ſhould God the Father be ours, without that Son of his Love, who hath ſaid, Joh. 16. 15. Joh. 17. 21. Joh. 14. 6. *All things that the Father hath, are mine: Thou O Father art in me, and I in thee: No man cometh to the Father, but by me?* If then Chriſt be mine all is mine: and if I have ſo oft received him, and ſo often renued my union with him, how is he but mine? O Saviour, let me feel my ſelf throughly poſſeſt of thee, whether the World ſlide, or ſink, I am happy.

LVII.

God will not vouchſafe to allow ſo much honour to wicked Inſtruments, as to make them the means of removing publick Evils: The Magicians of *Egypt* could

have

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have power to bring ſome plagues upon the Land, but had not the power to take them away; Certainly, there needed a greater power to give a Being to the frogs, then to call them off; yet this latter they cannot do who prevailed in the firſt: *Moſes* and *Aaron* muſt be called to fetch off that Judgment, which the Sorcerers have brought upon themſelves; neither is it otherwiſe ſtill: Wicked men can draw down thoſe Plagues upon a Nation, which only the faithful muſt remove: The ſins of the one make work for the others interceſſion: Do we therefore ſmart, and groan under heavy Calamities? we know to whom we are beholden: Jer. 14. 10, 12. *Thus ſaith the Lord to this people, thus have they loved to wander; they have not refrained their feet, therefore he will now remember their iniquity, and viſit their ſins; When they faſt, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offerings and an oblation, I will not accept them; but I will conſume them by the ſword, and by the famine, and by the peſtilence.* Do we deſire to be freed from the preſent evils and to eſcape an utter deſolation? They are *Moſes* and

and *Aaron* that muſt do it; Pſal. 106. *He ſaid that he would deſtroy them: had Moſes his choſen ſtood before him in the breach to turn a way his wrath, leſt he ſhould deſtroy them*: When our quarrel is with Heaven, it is not our force, or our policy that can ſave us: Every faithful man is a favourite of the King of glory, and can do more than command Legions: That is a people in ſome good way towards ſafety, when they have learned to know their friends. Whiles we have good mens Prayers to grapple with wicked mens Sins, there may be hopes of recovery.

LVIII.

The ayming at a good end can be no juſt excuſe for an unlawful act, or diſpoſition; but if contentment did conſiſt in having much, it were a ſore temptation to a man to be covetous; ſince that contentation is the thing wherein the heart of man is wont to place it's chief felicity: neither indeed can there be any poſſible happineſs without it; but the truth is, abundance is no whit guilty ſo much as of eaſe, much leſs of a full joy: how many have we known that have ſpent, more pleaſ-

nd happy hours, under an houſe of Sticks,
nd walls of Mud, and roof of Straw,
han great Potentates have done under
arbles, and Cedar? And how many,
orth wiſe Heathen, and mortified Chriſti-
ns have rid their hands of their cumber-
me ſtore, that they might be capable of
eing happy? Other creatures do natu-
ally neglect that which abuſed reaſon
ids us dote upon: If we had no better
ower than beaſts, or fowls, we ſhould
ot at all care for this either white, or red
arth; and if our graces were as great as
he leaſt of Saints, we ſhould look care-
elly upon the preciouſeſt and largeſt
reaſures that the earth can afford; now
ur debauched reaſon, in ſtead of ſtirring
s up to emulate the beſt Creatures,
raws us down below the baſeſt of them;
oving us to place our happineſs in thoſe
ings which have neither life, nor true
orth; much leſs can give that which
ey have not; It is not for the generous
ouls of Chriſtians to look ſo low, as to
lace their contentment in any thing whe-
er within the bowels or upon the face
f this earth; but to raiſe their thoughts

up

up to the glorious region of their original and rest: looking not at the things which are seen, 2 Cor. 4. 18. *but at the things which are not seen: for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

LIX.

The holy Psalmist knew well what he said when he called the thunder in the clouds, Psal. 29. 4. *The voyce of the Lord a voyce powerful* and *full of Majesty*: The very Heathens made this the most awful act of their *Jupiter*; which the Spirit of God expresses in a more divine language. The God *of glory thundreth*; upon this dreadful sound it is, that the Psalmist calls to the mighty ones, Psal. 29. 3. to *give unto the Lord glory and strength*, Psal. 29. 2. to *give unto the Lord the glory due to his name*: as it were advising the great Commanders of the World: when they hear it thunder, to fall down on their knees and to lift up their hands, and eyes, to that great God that speaks to them from Heaven: No man needs to bid the stoute heart to fear, when this terrible sound strikes through his ear; Which is able to

drive *Neroes* and *Caligulaes* into bench-holes. But this mighty voice calls for an improvement of our fear, to the glory of that Almighty power whence it proceeds; Perhaps, the presumption of men will be finding out the natural causes of this fearful uproar in the clouds; But the working by means derogates nothing from the God of nature, neither yet are all thunders natural; that Whirlwind and Thunder, wherein God spake to *Job*, *Job* 40. 9. 38. 1. That Thunder and Lightning wherein God spake to *Moses* and *Israel*, *Exod.* 19. in Mount *Sinai*; That Thunder and rain wherewith God answered the Prayer of *Samuel* in Wheat-harvest, 1 *Sam.* 12. 17, 8. for *Israels* conviction in the unseasonable suit for their King; That thundring voice from Heaven that answered the Prayer of the Son of God, for the glorifying of his Name, *Joh.* 12. 28, 29. The seven Thunders that uttered their voices to the beloved Disciple in *Pathmos*, *Rev.* 10. 3, 4. had nothing of ordinary nature in them: And how many have we heard and read of, That for sleighting of this great work of God, have at once heard

his

his Voice, and felt his Stroke. Shortly if any heart can be unmoved at the mighty voice of God, it is ſtiffer than the rocks in the Wilderneſs; for Pſal. 29. *The voice of the Lord ſhaketh the wilderneſs, the Lord ſhaketh the wilderneſs of Kadeſh.* For me, I tremble at the Power, while I adore the mercy of that great God, that ſpeaks ſo loud to me: It is my comfort that he is my Father, who approves himſelf thus omnipotent; his Love is no leſs infinite than his Power; let the terrour be to them that know him angry; let my confidence overcome my fear. *It is the Lord: let him do what he will:* All is not right with me till I have attained to tremble at him while he ſhineth, and to rejoyce in him whiles he thundreth.

LX.

We talk of mighty Warriors that have done great exploits in Conquering Kingdoms; but the Spirit of God tells us of a greater conqueſt than all theirs; 1 John 5. 4. *Whatſoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*; Alas, the conqueſt of thoſe great Commanders was

but poor and partial, of ſome ſmall ſpots of the earth; the conqueſt of a regenerate Chriſtian is Univerſal, of the whole World: Thoſe other conquerors, whiles they prevailed abroad, were yet overcome at home: and whiles they were the Lords of Nations, were no other then vaſſals to their own luſts: Theſe begin their victories at home, and enlarge their Triumphs over all their ſpiritual enemies: The glory of thoſe other victors was laid down with their bodies in the duſt; the glory that attends theſe, is Eternal; What pity it is that the true Chriſtian ſhould not know his own greatneſs; that he may raiſe his thoughts accordingly; and bear himſelf as one that tramples the World under his feet? John. 1. 16. *For all that is in the world, is the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life*; theſe he hath truly ſubdued in himſelf; not ſo as to bereave them of life, but of rule; if he have left them ſome kind of being ſtill in him, yet he hath left them no dominion; and therefore may well ſtile himſelf the Lord of the World: Far, far therefore be it from him, that he ſhould ſo abject, and

debaſe himſelf, as to be a ſlave to his vaſſals: none but holy and high thoughts, and demeanors, may now beſeem him; and in theſe ſpiritual regards of his inward greatneſs, and ſelf-conqueſt, his word muſt be either *Ceſar*, or nothing.

LXI.

I ſee ſo many kindes of phrenſies in the World, and ſo many ſeemingly wiſe brains taken with them, that I much doubt whom I may be ſure to account free from either the touch, or (at leaſt) the danger of the indiſpoſition; How many Opinions do I ſee raiſed every day, that argue no leſs than a meer ſpiritual madneſs; ſuch as if they ſhould have been but mentioned ſeven years ago, would have been queſtioned out of what Beadlam they had broken looſe. And for diſpoſitions; how do we ſee one ſo ragingly furious, as if he had newly torn off his chaines, and eſcaped; another ſo ſtupidly ſenſeleſs, that you may thruſt pins into him, up to the head and he ſtarties not at it: One ſo dumpiſh ſad, as if he would freez to death in melancholy, and hated any contentment but in ſorrow; another ſo apishly jocund,

if he cared for no other paſtime then to play with feathers: One ſo ſuperſtitiouſly devout, that he is ready to cringe, and crouch to every ſtocks; another ſo wildly phophane, that he is ready to ſpit God in the face: ſhortly, one ſo cenſorious of others, as if he thought all men mad but himſelf; another ſo mad, as that he thinks himſelf and all mad men ſober, and well-witted.

In this ſtore and variety of diſtempers (were I not ſure of my own principles) I could eaſily miſdoubt my ſelf; now ſetled on firm grounds, I can pity and bewail the woful diſtraction of many; and can but ſend them for recovery to that divine wiſdom who calls to them in the opening of the gates, and uttereth her words, ſaying; Prov. 1. 22. *How long ye ſilly ones will ye love ſimplicity? and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning and fools hate knowledg; turn you at my reproof*: Prov. 8. 5. *O ye ſimple understand wiſdom, and ye fools be ye of an understanding heart*: Prov. 8. 34, 36. *bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates*: *But he that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own Soul: all they that hate me, love death.*

LXII.

Man, as he consists of a double nature, Flesh and Spirit, so is he placed in a middle rank betwixt an Angel, which is Spirit, and a Beast, which is Flesh; partaking of the qualities, and performing the acts of both: he is angelical in his understanding, in his sensual affections, beastial: and to whether of these he most enclineth, and conformeth himself, that part wins more of the other, and gives a denomination to him; so as, he that was before half Angel, half beast, if he be drowned in sensuality, hath lost the Angel, and is become a beast; if he be wholly taken up with heavenly Meditations, he hath quit the beast, and is improved Angelical: It is hard to hold an equal temper; either he must degenerate into a Beast, or be advanced to an Angel; meer reason sufficiently apprehends the difference of the condition: Could a Beast be capable of that faculty, he would wish to be a Man, rather than a Brute, as he is: There is not more difference betwixt a Man, and Beast, than between an Angel and a brutish Man; How must I needs therefore be worse than Beast, if, when

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when I may be preferred to that happy honour, I shall rather effect to be a Beast, than an Angel? Away then with the Bestial delights of the sensual appetite; let not my Soul sink in this mud; let me be wholly for those intellectual pleasures which are pure and Spiritual: and let my ambition be, to come as neer to the Angel as this clog of my flesh will permit.

LXIII.

There is great difference in mens dispositions under affliction: Some there are, dead-hearted patients, that grow mopish and stupid, with too deep a sense of their sufferings; others out of a careless jollity are insensible even of sharp and heavy crosses: We are wont to speak of some whose inchanted flesh is invulnerable; this is the state of those hearts, which are so bewitched with worldly pleasures, that they are not to be peirced with any calamity, that may befal them in their estates, Children, Husbands, Wives, Friends; so as they can say with *Solomons* drunkard, Pro. 23.35. *They have stricken me and I was not sick, they have beaten me, but I felt it not*; These are dead flesh, which do no more feel

the knife, than if it did not at all enter. for whom ſome corroſives are neceſſary to make them capable of ſmart: This diſpoſition, though it ſeem to carry a face of Fortitude, and Patience, yet is juſtly offenſive; and not a little injurious both to God and the Soul: to God; whom it indeavours to fruſtrate of thoſe holy ends which he propoſeth to himſelf in our ſufferings; for wherefore doth he afflict us, if he would not have us afflicted? wherefore doth the Father whip the Child, but that he would have him ſmart; and by ſmarting bettered? he looks for cryes and tears; and the Child that weeps not under the rod is held graceleſs. To the Soul, whom it robs of the benefit of our ſuffering; for what uſe can there be of patience where there is no ſence of evil? and how can patience have its perfect work, where it is not?

Betwixt both theſe extreams, if we would have our Souls proſper, a middle diſpoſition muſt be attained; we muſt be ſo ſenſible of evils, that we be not ſtupified with them; and ſo reſolute under our croſſes, that we may be truly ſenſible of them: not ſo brawned under the rod

that we ſhould not feel it; nor yet ſo tender that we ſhould over-feel it: not more patient under the ſtripe, than willing to kiſs the hand that inflicts it.

LXIV.

God as he is one, ſo he loves ſingleneſs and ſimplicity in the inward parts: is therefore he hath been pleaſed to give us thoſe ſenſes double, whereby we might let in for our ſelves, or our eyes, and ears; and thoſe limbs double, whereby we might act for our ſelves, as our hands and feet; ſo thoſe which he would appropriate to himſelf, as our hearts for beleif, and our tongue for confeſſion, he hath given us ſingle,; neither did he ever ordain, or can abide two hearts in a boſom, two tongues in one mouth: It is then the hateful ſtile which the Spirit of God gives to an hypocrite; that he is *double-minded Jam* 4. 8. In the language of Gods Spirit, a fool hath no heart, and a diſſembler hath an heart, and an heart; and ſurely, as a man that hath two heads is a monſter in nature, ſo he that hath two hearts is no leſs a ſpiritual monſter to God: For the holy and wiſe God hath made one for one;

One Mind, or Soul, for one body: And if the regenerate man have two men in one; the old man, and the new; yet it is so, as that one is Flesh, the other Spirit: the mind then is not double; but the law of the mind is opposed to the law of the flesh; *Rom.* 7. 23. so as here are striving in one heart, not the sidings, of two: for surely, the God of unity can neither indure multiplication, nor division of hearts in one breast: If then we have one heart for God, another for Mammon, we may be sure God will not own this latter, how should he, for he made it not? Yea, most justly will he disclaim both, since that which he made was but one, this double. And as the wise man hath told us, that God hates nothing which he hath made; so may we truly say, God hateth whatsoever he made not; since what he made not, is only evil: When I have done my best, I shall have but a weak and a faulty heart; but Lord, let it be but a single one: Psal. 139. 23, 24. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

LXV.

LXV.

There is a kind of not being in ſin; for ſin is not an exiſtence of ſomewhat that is, but a deficiency of that rectitude which ſhould be: it is a privation, but not without a real miſchief; as blindneſs is but a privation of ſight, but a true miſery; Now a privation cannot ſtand alone; it muſt have ſome ſubject to lean upon; there is no blindneſs but where there is an eye, no death but where there hath been a life: ſin therefore ſuppoſes a Soul, wherein it is, and an act whereto it cleaveth: and thoſe acts of ſin are they which the Apoſtle calls the *works of darkneſs*, Eph. 5. 12. So as there is a kind of operoſity in Sin, in regard whereof ſinners are ſtiled *The workers of iniquity*, Luk. 18. 27. And ſurely there are ſins, wherein there is more toile and labour, than in the holieſt actions: What Pains and Care doth the thief take in ſetting his match, in watching for his prey? How doth he ſpend the darkeſt and couldeſt nights in the excution of his plot? What fears, what flights, what hazards, what ſhifts are here to avoyd notice and puniſhment?

adulterer ſays, *That ſtoln waters are ſweet*: but that ſweet is ſauced to him with many careful thoughts, with many deadly dangers: The ſuperſtitious bygot, who is himſelf beſotted with error, how doth he traverſe Sea and Land to make a proſelyte? What adventures doth he make, what perils doth he run, what death doth he challenge, to mar a Soul?

So as ſome men take more pains to go to Hell, than ſome others do, to go to Heaven: O the ſottiſhneſs of ſinners, that with a temporary miſery will needs purchaſe an eternal! How ſhould we think no pains ſufficient for the attaining of Heaven, when we ſee wretched men toile ſo much for damnation?

LXVI.

With what elegance and force doth the holy Ghoſt expreſs our Saviours leaving of the world; which he calls his taking home again, or his receiving up, *Luk.* 9. 51. In the former, implying, That the Son of God was, for the time, ſent out of his Father's houſe, to thoſe lower regions of his exile or pilgrimage, and was now re-admitted into thoſe his glorious manſions; In the latter

latter, ſo intimating his triumphant Aſcenſion, that he paſſeth over his bitter paſſion: Surely, he was to take death in his way? ſo he told his Diſciples in the walk to *Emaus*: Luk. 24. 26. *Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer theſe things, and to enter into his glory?* He muſt be lifted up to the Croſs, ere his Aſcenſion to Heaven: but, as if the thought of Death were ſwallowed up in the bleſſed iſſue of his Death, here is no mention of ought but his Aſſumption; Lo, Death truly ſwallowed up in victory: Neither is it otherwiſe proportionally with us: wholly ſo it cannot be; for, as for him, Death did but taſt of him, could not devour him, much leſs put him over; It could not but yield him whole and entire the third day, without any impairing of his nature; yea, with an happy addition to it, of a glorious immortality: and in that glorified humanity he aſcended by his own Power into his Heaven: For us, we muſt be content that one part of us lie rotting for the time, in the duſt, whiles our ſpiritual part ſhall by the miniſtery of Angels be received up to thoſe everlaſting habitations: Here is an Aſſumption.

ption therefore, true and happy, though not, as yet, total: And why ſhould I not therefore have my heart taken up with the aſſured expectation of this receiving up into my glory? Why do I not look beyond Death, at the eternally bleſſed condition of this ſoul of mine; which in my diſſolution is crowned with immortality? So doth the Sea-beaten Marriner cheer up himſelf with the ſight of that Heaven, which he makes for; So doth the Traveller comfort himſelf, when after a tempeſtuous ſtorm he ſees the Sun breaking forth in his brightneſs.

I am dieing; but, O Saviour, Joh. 11. 13. *thou art the reſurrection and the life; he that believes in thee, though he be dead yet ſhall he live:* Eſa. 26. 19. *Awake, and ſing ye that dwell in the duſt; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead: Bleſſed are the dead, that die in the Lord for they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them.*

LXVII.

What need I be troubled that I find in my ſelf a fear of Death? What *Iſraelite* is not ready to run away at the ſight of this

this *Goliah*? This fear is natural, and so far from being evil, that it was incident into the Son of God, who was heard in that which he feared; Christianity serves not to destroy, but to rectifie nature. Grace regulates this passion in us, and corrects the exorbitances of it, never intended to root it out: Let me therefore entertain this fear, but so, as that I may master it; if I cannot avoid fear, let it be such as may be incident into a faithful man: Whiles my fear apprehends just terrour in the face of Death, let my faith lay fast hold on that blessed Saviour, who hath both overcome, and sweetned it; on that blessed estate of glory which accompanies it; my fear shall end in joy, my death in advantage.

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LXVIII.

It is too plain that we are faln upon the old age of the world; the last times, and therefore neareſt to the dissolution; and if time it self did not evince it, the disposition and qualities would most evidently do it; For to what a cold temper of charity are we grown? what meer ice is in these spiritual veins? the unnatural and unkindly flushings of self-love abound

abound indeed every where; but for true Christian love it is come to old *David's* pass, it may be covered with cloathes, 1 *King.* 1.1. but it can get no heat: Besides, what whimsies, and fancies of dotage do we find the world possessed withal, beyond the examples of all former times! what wild and mad opinions have been lately broached, which the setled brains of better Ages could never have imagined! Unto these, how extreamly cholerick the world is grown, in these latter times, there needs no other proof then the effusion of so much bloud in this present Age, as many preceding centuries of years have been sparing to spill.

What should I speak of the moral distempers of diseases, the confluence whereof hath made this Age more wickedly miserable than all the former? for, when ever was there so much prophaneness, atheism, blasphemy, schism, excess, disobedience, oppression, licentiousness, as we now sigh under? Lastly, that which is the common fault of Age, loquacity, is a plain evidence of the worlds declinedness; for, was there ever Age guilty of so much

tongue

tongue, and pen as this laſt? were ever the Preſſes ſo cloyed with frivolous work? Every man thinks what he liſts, and ſpeaks what he thinks, and writes what he ſpeaks, and prints what he writes; Neither would the world talk ſo much, did it not make account it cannot talk long. What ſhould we do then, ſince we know the world truly old, and now going upon his great, and fatal Climacterical, but as diſcreet men would curry themſelves to impotent and decrepid Age; bear with the infirmities of it, pity and bewail the diſtempers, ſtrive againſt the enormities, and prepare for the diſſolution.

LXIX.

There cannot be a ſtronger motive to awe and obedience, than that which Saint *Peter* enforceth; 1 *Pet.* 1.17 That God is both a Father and a Judg: The one is a title of Love and Mercy; the other of Juſtice. What ever God is, he is all that; he is all Love and Mercy; He is all Juſtice; He is not ſo a Judg, that he hath waved the title and affection of a Father: He is not ſo a Father that he will remit ought of his infinite juſtice as a Judg: He

He is, he will ever be both theſe in one; and we muſt faſten our eyes upon both theſe at once; and be accordingly affected unto both: He is a Father, therefore here muſt be a loving awe: he is a Judg, and therefore here muſt be an awful love and obedience. So muſt we lay hold upon the tender Mercies of a Father that we may rejoyce continually; ſo muſt we apprehend the Juſtice of a righteous Judg, that we do lovingly tremble, Why then ſhould man deſpair? God is a Father; All the bowels of mortal and humane love, are ſtreight to his: *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee, ſaith the Lord,* Iſa. 49. 15. That which is the title of his perſonality in divine relation, is alſo the title of his gracious relation to us, *Father*; neither can he be other then he is ſtiled; And contrarily how dare man preſume, ſince this Father is a Judg? It is for ſinful fleſh and bloud to be partial; fooliſh parents may be apt to connive at the ſins of their own loyns, or bowels, becauſe theirs;

either

either they will not ſee them, or not hate them, or not cenſure them, or not puniſh them: The infinite juſtice of a God cannot wink at our failings: There is no debt of our ſin, but muſt be paid in our ſelves, or our ſurety: If then we call him, 1 Pet. 1.17. *Father, who without reſpect of perſons judgeth according to every mans work*; why do we not *paſs the time of our ſojourning here in fear?*

LXX.

How terrible a motion was that, (which was made by the two Diſciples) of commanding fire to come down from Heaven, and conſume the inhoſpital *Samaritans*? Me thinks, I could tremble but at the imagination of ſo dreadful a judgment, as they did not fear to ſue for; Yet if we look to the offence, it was no poſitive act of indignity offered to Chriſt; but the meer not lodging of his train; and that, not out of a rude inhumanity, but out of a Religious ſcruple: what could they have ſaid, if theſe *Samaritans* had purſued them with ſwords, and ſtaves, and ſtones? Whom ſhall we hope to find free from cruelty of revenge, when even the Diſciple of

of Love was thus over-taken? What wonder is it if natural men be transported with furious desires, when so eminent Domesticks, and followers of our Saviour were thus faulty? Surely nature in man is cruel; neither is there any creature under Heaven so bloudy to its own kind: Even Bears and Wolves, and Tigers devour not one another; and if any of them fall out in single combats for a prey, here is no publique engaging for blood; neither do they affect to enjoy each others torment; rather entertaining one anothers complaints with pity; Let but a swine cry, the rest of the herd within the noise, come running in, to see and compassionate his pain; only man rejoyces in the misery of the same flesh and bloud with himself, and loves to triumph in his revenge: whiles we are thus affected, we know not of what Spirit we are; we may soon learn; we are even of that spirit who was *a man slayer from the beginning*, Joh. 8. 44. as for the good spirit, his just style is *the preserver of men* Job. 7. 20. and the errand of the son of man was, not *to destroy men's lives, but to save them*: Luk. 9. 56. and his charge

charge to these, and all other his disciples Luk. 6. 36. *Be merciful, as your Father also is merciful*; and how easily may we observe that this very disciple (as if in way of abundant satisfaction for this rash overright) calls more for love, than all the rest of his masters train, telling us that *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 Joh. 4. 16. and, *Beloved, let us love one another: For love is of God; and every one that loveth is of God, and knoweth God*, 1 Joh. 4. 7. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is love.* 1 Joh. 4. 8. Shortly then, what would not this holy Disciple have given to have recalled this fiery motion? The more mercy and charity is in us, the more we have of God; the more fury, and revenge; of Satan.

LXXI.

Much caution must be had in our imitation of the actions of the holiest: cautions, both in respect of the persons, and of the actions: God himself yea, God cloathed in flesh, (though the pattern of all perfection) is not for our universal imitation; the most of their actions are for our wonder, not for

for our exampling; and amongst men how absurd were it in a peasant to imitate a King? or one of the long robe, a Souldier if Moses climb up the hill of God, *Sinai* shall another *Israelite* say, *Moses* goes up, why not I? So he might have paid dear for his presumption: *Moses* was called up, the rest were limited and if a beast touch the hill, he shall die. That act may beseem one, which would be very incongruous in another; The dog fawns upon his master, and hath his back stroaked; if the Ass do the like, he is beaten: We are naturally apt to be carried with examples: It is one of the greatest improvements of wisedom to know, whom, in what, and how far we may imitate: The best have their weaknesses; there is no coppy without a blur. Phil. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 16. 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me*, saith the chosen Vessel: but how? *Even as I am of Christ*: It is safest following him that cannot err.

LXXII.

God who is simply one, infinitely perfect, absolutely compleat in himself, enjoys himself fully, from all eternity, with-

out

out any relation to the Creature: but knowing our wants, and weaknesses, he hath ordained a society for our well being; and therefore even in mans innocency, could say, *it is not good for man to be alone*: and why Lord? why might not man have taken pleasure enough in the beauty and sweetness of his Paradise, in contemplating thine Heaven, in the command of thine obsequious Creatures, and above all the fruition of thy divine presence, in that happy integrity of his nature without any accession of other helps? Surely, thou who knewest well what disposition thou hadst put into him, intendedst to fit him with all meet conveniences: and thou who madest him sociable, before he could have any society; thoughtst fit to stead him with such a society, as might make his life comfortable to him. Wise *Solomon* observes it out of his deep experience, Eccl. 4. 7,8,9. *for a vanity under the Sun, that there is one alone, and there is not a second*; and that, *two are better then one, because they have a good reward for their labour.*

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In the plantation of the Evangelical Church, the Apoſtles are not reckoned ſingle, but by Pairs; *Mat.* 10. 2, 3, 4. and ſo doth their Lord ſend them upon the great errand of his Goſpel: And when he ſeconded that Work by a commiſſion given to his ſeventy Diſciples; Luke 10. 1. *He ſent them two and two before his face, into every City and place, whither he himſelf would come*: After this, when our Saviour had left the earth, *Paul* and *Barnabas* go together; and when they are parted, *Paul* and *Silas*, *Barnabas* and *Mark* are ſorted: Single indeavors ſeldom proſper; many hands make the work both quick and ſure: They can be no friends to the happy eſtate of a Family or Church, that labour to cauſe diſtractions; Diviſion makes certain way for ruine.

LXXIII.

Under the Law there was difference, as of Ages, ſo of Sexes: Circumciſion was appropriated to the Male: In the Temple there was the Court of the Jews; and without that, the Court of the Women; neither might that Sex go beyond their bounds

bounds; and ſtill it is ſo in their Jewiſh Synagogues: But in Chriſt, there is neither Male, nor Female. As the Soul hath no Sex; ſo God makes no difference in the acceptation of either: As it is the honour of the one Sex, that Chriſt the Son of God was a man; ſo it is the honour of the other Sex, that he was born of a Woman: And if the Woman be (as ſhe is in nature) the weaker veſſel, yet ſhe is no leſs capable of Grace, than the ſtronger; as the thineſt glaſs may receive as precious liquor, as the beſt plate: Luk. 2.38. Good *Anna* as well as *Simeon* gave glory to their new-born Saviour, to all *that looked for redemption in Jeruſalem*, And afterwards the holy Woman were no leſs zealous attendants of Chriſt, both in his Life and Death, *Luk.* 8. 2, 3. than the moſt forward Diſciples; yea, they followed him, when his domeſtick followers forſook him; neither could be parted by either his Croſs or his Grave.

And they were the firſt that were honoured with the notice, and meſſage of their Saviours bleſſed Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion; *Joh* 20. 17. than which, what im-

imployment could be more noble; *The Lord gave the word*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 68. 11. *great was the company of the Preachereſſes*; the word is Femine: However therefore in natural, and politick reſpects, the Philoſopher might have ſome reaſon to bleſs God, that he had made him a man, and not a woman; yet in ſpiritual (which are the beſt) regards here is no inequality; ſo that it is the great mercy and goodneſs of our common Creatour, that though he hath made a difference in the ſmalleſt matters, yet he makes none in the greateſt; and that he ſo indifferently peoples Heaven with both Sexes, that, for ought we know, the greateſt Saint there is of the weaker Sex.

King James his Preface Monitory.

LXXIV.

There is nothing more eaſie than for a man to be couragious in a time of ſafety, and to defie thoſe dangers which he neither feels nor ſees. Whiles the Coaſt is clear, every man can be ready to ſay with *Peter*, Mark. 14. 31. *Though all men, yet not I; If I ſhould die with thee, I will*

not deny thee in any wise: but when the evil hour cometh, when our enemy appears armed in the lists, ready to encounter us, then to call up our Spirits, and to grapple resolutely with dangers and Death, it is the Praise and Proof of a true Christian valour.

And this is that which the Apostle calls *standing*; *Ephes.* 6. 13, 14. in opposition to both falling and feeling: Falling out of faintness, and feeling for fear. It shall not be possible for us thus to stand, if we shall trust to our own feet; In, and of our selves, the best of us are but meer cowards; neither can be able so much as to look our enemy in the face: Would we be perfect Victors? We must go out of our selves, into the God of our strength: If we have made him ours, who shall, yea, who can be against us? Phil. 4. 13. *We can do all things through him that strengthens us*: All things; therefore conquer Death and Hell: If we be weakness, he is Omnipotence; *Rom.* 13. 14. Put we on the Lord Jesus Christ by a lively Faith, what enemy can come within us to do us hurt? Psal. 56. 3, 4. *What time I am afraid*

fraid, I will truſt in thee, O God: *In thee, O God, have I truſted, I will not fear what* (either) *fleſh* (or ſpirit) *can do unto me.* Pſal. 18. 2, 3. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortreſs, and my deliverer; my God, my ſtrength, in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and the horn of my ſalvation; I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praiſed; ſo ſhall I be ſaved from mine enemies.*

LXXV.

It is diſparagement enough that the Apoſtle caſts upon all the viſible things of this World, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. That *the things which are ſeen are temporary:* Be they never ſo glorious, yet being tranſitory, they cannot be worthy of our hearts. Who would care for an houſe of Glaſs, tho never ſo curiouſly painted and gilded? All things that are meaſured by time are thus brittle: Bodily ſubſtances of what kind ſoever, lye open to the eye, and being ſeen, can be in no other, than a fading condition: even that goodly Fabrick of Heaven, which we ſee, and all mire, muſt be changed, and in a ſort diſſolved: How much more vaniſhing and all earthly glories? 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. 12. and

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by how much ſhorter their continuance is, ſo much lower muſt be their valuation: We account him fooliſh that will dote too much upon a Flower, though never ſo beautiful; becauſe we know it can be but a Months pleaſure; and no care, no art can preſerve it from Withering; amongſt the reſt the Hemerocallis is the leaſt eſteemed, becauſe one day ends its beauty: What madneſs then were it in us to ſet our hearts upon theſe periſhing contentments, which we muſt ſoon mutually leave, we them, they us: Eternity is that only thing which is worthy to take up the thoughts of a wiſe man; that being added to evil makes the evil infinitely more intolerable; and being added to good, makes the good infinitely more deſireable.

O Eternity! thou bottomleſs abyſs of Miſery to the Wicked; thou indeterminable pitch of Joy to the Saints of God; what ſoul is able to comprehend thee? what ſtrength of underſtanding is able to conceive of thee? Be thou ever in my thoughts, ever before mine eyes: Be thou the ſcope of all my actions, of all

my endeavours: and in respect of thee, let all this visible World be to me as nothing: And since only the things *which are not seen* by the eye of sense *are eternal*; Lord, sharpen thou the eyes of my faith that I may see those things invisible, and may in that sight, enjoy thy blessed Eternity.

LXXVI.

What is all the World to us in comparison of the Bird in our Bosom, our Conscience? In vain shall all the World acquit and magnifie us, if that secretly condemn us; and if that condemn us not, 1 Joh. 3. 31. *We have confidence towards God*, and may bid defiance to Men and Devils: Now that it may not condemn us; it must be both pacified and purged: pacified in respect of the guilt of sin, purged in respect of the corruption.

For so long as there is guilt in the soul, the clamours of an accusing and condemning Conscience can no more be stilled, than the Waters of the Sea can stand still in a Storm: There is then no pacification without removing the guilt of sin: no removing of guilt without remission; no remission

miſſion without ſatisfaction: no ſatisfaction without a price of infinite value anſwerable to the infiniteneſs of the Juſtice offended: and this is no where to be had, but in the bloud of Chriſt, God and Man: All created and finite powers are but miſerable comforters, Phyſitians of no value, to this one.

And the ſame power that pacifieth the Conſcience from the guilt, muſt alſo purge it from the filthineſs of ſin; *Heb.* 9. 14. even that bloud of the Son of God, who *is made unto us of God, Sanctification and Redemption*, 1 Joh. 1. 7. That Faith which brings Chriſt home to the Soul, doth by the efficacy of his bleſſed Spirit, purifie the heart from *all filthineſs* both *of fleſh and Spirit*: Act. 15. 9. *Being juſtified by this faith, we have peace with God*: When once the heart is quieted from the uproars of Self-accuſation, and cleanſed from dead Works; What in this World can ſo much concern us, as to keep it ſo? Which ſhall be done, if we ſhall give Chriſt the poſſeſſion of our Souls, and commit the Keys into his only Hands; ſo ſhall nothing be ſuffered to enter in, that may

diſturb or defile it; if we ſhall ſettle firm reſolutions in our Breaſts, never to yield to the commiſſion of any known, enormious ſin: Failings and Slips there will be in the holieſt of Gods Saints, whiles they carry their clay about them; For these we are allowed to fetch forth a pardon of courſe from that infinite mercy of our God, who hath ſet a Fountain open, Zech. 13. 1. *to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin, and for uncleanneſs*; by the force of our daily Prayers: But if, through an over-bold ſecurity, and ſpiritual negligence, we ſhall ſuffer our ſelves to be drawn away into ſome heinous Wickedneſs, it muſt coſt warm Water to recover us: Neither can it, in ſuch a caſe, be ſafe for us, to ſuffer our eyes to ſleep, or our eye-lids to ſlumber, till we have made our peace with Heaven: This done, and carefully maintained, what can make us other than happily ſecure? Eccl. 14. 2. *bleſſed is he whoſe conſcience hath not condemned him, and who is not faln from his hope in the Lord.*

LXXVII.

We cannot apprehend Heaven in any notion but of Excellency, and Glory; that as it is in it ſelf a place of wonderful Reſplendance and Majeſty; ſo it is the Palace of the moſt high God, wherein he exhibits his Infinite Magnificence; that is the happy Receptacle of all the Elect of God: that it is the glorious Rendezvous of the bleſſed Angels; that we have Parents, Children, Husband, Wife, Brothers, Siſters, Friends, whom we dearly loved, there: For ſuch is the power of Love, that it can endear any place to us where the party affected is; much more the beſt; If it be a loathſome Gaol, our affection can make it a delightful Bower; yea the very Grave cannot keep us off: The women could ſay of *Mary*, that ſhe was gone to the Grave of *Lazarus* to weep there: and the zeal of thoſe holy Clients of Chriſt carries them to ſeek their (as they ſuppoſed ſtill dead) Saviour, even in his Tomb: Above all conceivable apprehenſions then, wherein Heaven is endeared to us, there is none comparable

to that, which the Apoſtle enforceth to us, that, *Coloſ.* 3. 1. there *Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God*: If we have an Husband, Wife, Child, whom we dearly love, pent up in ſome Tower or Caſtle afar off, whither we are not allowed to have acceſs; how many longing eyes do we caſt thither; how do we pleaſe our ſelves to think, within thoſe Walls is he incloſed whom my Soul loveth; and who is incloſed in my heart; but if it may be poſſible to have paſſage (though with ſome difficulty and danger) to the place, how gladly do we put our ſelves upon the adventure? When therefore we hear and certainly know that our moſt dear Saviour is above, in all heavenly Glory; and that the Heavens muſt contain him till his coming again, with what full contentment of heart ſhould we look up thither? How ſhould we break through all theſe ſecular diſtractions, and be carried up by our affections (which are the wings of the Soul) towards an happy fruition of him? Good old *Jacob*, when he heard that his darling Son was yet alive in *Egypt*, how doth he gather up his ſpirits,

and

and takes up a cheerful reſolution, *Gen.* 45. 26. *Joſeph my Son is yet alive, I will go and ſee him before I dye?* Do we think his heart was any more in *Canaan*, after he heard where his *Joſeph* was? And ſhall we, when we hear, and know, where our deareſt Saviour (typified by that good Patriark) is; that he is gone before to provide a place for us in *Goſhen* above, ſhall we be heartleſs in our deſires towards him, and take up with earth? How many poor Souls take tedious, coſtly, perilous voyages to that Land (which only the bodily preſence of our Saviour could denominate holy (their own wickedneſs juſtly ſtiles accurſed) only to ſee the place, where our dear Saviour trod; where he ſtood, where he ſate, lay, ſet his laſt footing; and find a kind of contentment in this ſacred curioſity, returning yet never the holier, never the happier; how then ſhould I be affected with the ſight of that place, where he is now in Perſon, ſitting gloriouſly at the right hand of Majeſty, adored by all the powers of Heaven? Let it be a Covenant between me and my eyes, never to look

up at Heaven, (as how can I look beſide it?) but I ſhall, in the ſame inſtant, think of my bleſſed Saviour, ſitting there in his glorified humanity, united to the incomprehenſible--glorious Deity, attended and worſhiped by thouſand thouſands of Saints and Angels, preparing a place for me and all his elect in thoſe eternal Manſions.

LXXVIII.

How lively doth the Spirit of God deſcribe the Heavenly affections of faithful *Abraham*; that *he looked for a city which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God*, Heb. 11. 10. What City was this, but the Celeſtial *Jeruſalem*, the glorious ſeat of the Great Empire of Heaven? The main ſtrength of any building is in the Foundation; if that be firm and ſure; the Fabrick well knit together will ſtand: but if that be either not laid, or lye looſe and unſetled, the tottering frame doth but wait upon the next wind for a ruine; The good Patriark had been uſed to dwell in Tents, which were not capable of a Foundation: It is like, he and his Anceſtors wanted not good houſes in

Chalda

Chaldea, where they were formerly planted; God calls him forth of those fixed Habitations in his own Country, to sojourn in Tabernacles, or Booths in a strange Land; his Faith carries him cheerfully along, his present fruition gives way to hope of better things; instead of those poor sheds of sticks and skins, he looks for a City; instead of those stakes and cords, he looks for Foundations; instead of mens work, he looks for the Architecture of God. Alas, we men will be building Castles and Towers here upon Earth, or, in the Ayr rather; such as either have no Foundation at all; or at the best only a Foundation in the dust; neither can they be any other, whiles they are of mans making; for what can he make in better condition than himself? The City that is of Gods building is deep, and firmly grounded upon the Rock of his eternal decree; and hath more Foundations than one; and all of them both sure and costly; Gods material House built by *Solomon* had the Foundation laid with great squared stone. *Rev.* 21. 19. but *the foundations of the wall of* this

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this *City* of God are *garniſhed with all manner of precious ſtones*; *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O thou City of God*: Why do I ſet up my reſt in this houſe of clay, which is every day falling on my head, whiles I have the aſſured expectation of ſo glorious a dwelling above? 2 Cor. 4. 1. *For we know that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God*; *an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

LXXIX.

God, though he be free of his entertainments, yet is curious of his gueſts: we know what the great houſe-keeper ſaid to the ſordid gueſt; *Friend how cameſt thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment!* To his feaſt of glory none can come but the pure; without this diſpoſition no man ſhall ſo much as ſee God, much leſs be entertained by him, *Heb.* 12. 14. To his feaſt of Grace none may come but the clean, and thoſe who upon ſtrict examination have found themſelves worthy: That we may be meet to ſit at either of theſe Tables, *Coloſ.* 3. 9, 10. there muſt be a putting off, ere there can be a putting on;

a putting off the old garments, ere there can be a putting on the new; the old are foul and ragged, the new clean and holy; for if they should be worn at once, the foul and beastly under-garment would soyl, and defile the clean; the clean could not cleanse the foul: As it was in the *Jewish* law of holiness, holy flesh in the skirt of the garment could not infuse an holiness into the garment; *Haggai* 2. 12, 13. but the touch of an unclean person might diffuse uncleanness to the garment: Thus our professed holiness, and pretended graces are sure to be defiled by our secretly-maintained corruption, not our corruption sanctified by our graces; as in common experience, if the sound person come to see the infected; the infected may easily taint the sound; the sound cannot by his presence heal the infected: If ever therefore we look to be welcome to the feasts of God, we must *put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledg after the Image of him that created him.* Colos. 3. 9, 10.

LXXX.

LXXX.

It is not for us to caſt a diſparagement upon any work of our Maker; much leſs upon a peece ſo neer, ſo eſſential to us: yet with what contempt doth the Apoſtle ſeem ſtill to mention our *fleſh*? and, as if he would have it ſleighted for ſome forlorn out-caſt, he charges us, not to *make proviſion for the fleſh*, Rom. 13. 14. What? ſhall we think the holy man was faln out with a part of himſelf? Surely, ſometimes his language that he gives it, is hard: Rom. 7. 18. *The fleſh rebels against the ſpirit: I know that in me (that is in my fleſh) dwelleth no good thing:* but how eaſie is it to obſerve, that the *Fleſh* ſometimes goes for the body of man; ſometimes for the body of ſin: as the firſt, it is a partner with the Soul; as the latter, it is an enemy; and the worſt of enemies, ſpiritual: No marvel then if he would not have proviſion made for ſuch an enemy: In outward and bodily enmity, the caſe, and his charge is otherwiſe: Pro. 25. 21. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink:* Rom. 12. 20. but here, *make no proviſion for the fleſh:* What reaſon

reaſon were there that a man ſhould furniſh, and ſtrengthen an enemy againſt himſelf? But if the *fleſh* be the body of the man, it muſt challenge a reſpect; but the very name carries an intimation of baſeneſs; at the beſt, it is that which is common to beaſts with us, 1 Cor. 15. 39. *There is one fleſh* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *of men, another fleſh of beaſts*; both are but fleſh: Alas, what is it but a clod of earth better molded, the clog of the Soul, a rotten pile, a pack of duſt, a feaſt of worms? But even as ſuch, proviſion muſt be made for it; with a moderate and thrifty care, not with a ſolicitous: a proviſion for the neceſſities and convenience of life, not for the fulfilling of the luſts: This fleſh muſt be fed, and clad; not humor'd, not pampered: ſo fed as to hold up nature, not inordinateneſs; ſhortly, ſuch an hand muſt we hold over it, as that we may make it a good ſervant, not a lawleſs wanton.

LXXXI.

What action was ever ſo good, or ſo compleatly done, as to be well taken of all hands? *Noah* and *Lot* foretel of judg-

judgments from God, upon the old world, and *Sodom*, and are ſcoffed at: *Iſrael* would go to ſacrifice to God in the wilderneſs, and they are idle; *Moſes* and *Aaron* will be governing *Iſrael* according to Gods appointments; *Ye take too much upon you, ye ſons of Levi: David* will be dancing before the *Ark* of the Lord; 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. He uncovers himſelf ſhamelesly as one of the vain fellows: Our Saviour is ſociable, Matt. 11. 18, 19. *He is a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and ſinners: John Baptiſt* is ſolitary, and auſtere; He hath a divel: Chriſt caſts out devils; He doth it by *Beelzebub* the Prince of devils: He rides in an homely pomp through *Jeruſalem*; he affects a temporal kingdom; and he is no friend to *Ceſar* that can ſuffer him to live. He is by his Almighty power riſen from the dead; his Diſciples ſtole him away, whiles the Souldiers ſlept: The Spirit of God deſcends upon the Apoſtles in fiery and cloven tongues, and they thus inſpired, ſuddenly ſpeak all Languages; *Act.* 2. 13, they are full of new wine. *Stephen* preacheth Chriſt the end of the Law; *Act* 6. 11.

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He ſpeaks blaſphemous words againſt *Moſes* and againſt God; and what aſperſions were caſt upon the primitive Chriſtians, all Hiſtories witneſs: What can we hope to do, or ſay, that ſhall eſcape the cenſures, and miſ-interpretations of men, when we ſee the Son of God could not avoyd it? Let a man profeſs himſelf honeſtly conſcionable, he is a ſcrupulous hypocrite; Let him take but a juſt liberty in things meerly indifferent, he is looſely profane; Let him be charitably affected to both parts (though in a quarrel not fundamental,) he is an odious neuter, a luke-warm *Laodicean*: It concerns every wiſe Chriſtian to ſettle his heart in a reſolved confidence of his own holy and juſt grounds, and then to go on in a conſtant courſe of his well-warranted judgment, and practiſe with a careleſs diſ-regard of thoſe fools-bolts which will be ſure to be ſhot at him, which way ſoever he goes.

LXXXII.

All Gods dear and faithful ones are notably deſcribed by the Apoſtle to be ſuch as *love the appearing of our Lord Jeſus*; 2 Tim. 4.8. for certainly, we can-

cannot be true friends to thoſe whoſe pr[e]ſ[e]nce we do not deſire and delight in; now this appearing is either in his coming to us, or our going to him; whether ever it be, that he makes his glorious return to us for the Judgment of the World, and the full Redemption of his Elect; or, that he fetches us home to himſelf, for the fruition of his bleſſedneſs; in both, or either, we enjoy his appearance: If then we can only be content with either of theſe; but do not love them, nor wiſh for them; our hearts are not yet right with God: It is true that there is ſome terror in the way to both theſe; his returne to us is not without a dreadfull Majeſtie; 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. for the *Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noyſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat*; and the glorious retinue of his bleſſed Angels muſt needs be with an aſtoniſhing magnificence; and on the other part our paſſage to him muſt be through the Gates of Death, wherein nature cannot but apprehend an horror; but the immediate iſſue of both theſe is ſo infinitely advantageous, and happy, that the

the fear is eaſily ſwallowed up of the joy; *Judg.* 11. 34. Doth the Daughter of *Jephtah* abate ought of her Timbrels and Dances becauſe ſhe is to meet a Father whoſe arms are bloudy with victory? Doth a loving Wife entertain her returning Husband otherwiſe then with gladneſs, becauſe he comes home in a military pomp? Is the Conqueror leſs joyful to take up his Crown, becauſe it is congratulated to him with many peals of Ordnance? Certainly then, neither that heavenly ſtate wherein Chriſt ſhall return to us; nor the fears of an harmleſs and beneficial death, wherein we ſhall paſs to him, either may, nor can hinder ought of our love to his appearing: O Saviour, come in whatever equipage or faſhion thou wilt, thou canſt be no other then lovely, and welcome: *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

LXXXIII.

Suppoſe a man comes to me on the ſame errand which the Prophet delivered to *Hezekiah*; 2 Kin. 10. 1. *Set thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye, and not live*: with what welcome do I entartain him?

him? Do I, with that good King, turn my face to the wall, and weep? or do I say of the meſſenger as *David* ſaid of *Ahimaaz*; 2 Sam. 18. 27. *He is a good man, and brings good tidings?* Surely, Nature urges me to the former, which cannot but hold Diſſolution her greateſt Enemy; for what can ſhe abhor ſo much as a not-being? Faith perſuades me to the latter; telling me that, *To dye is gain*; Philip. 1. 23. Now, whether of theſe two ſhall prevail with me? Certainly, as each of them hath a ſhare in me; ſo ſhall either of them act its own part in my ſoul: Nature ſhall obtain ſo much of me; as to fetch from me, upon the ſuddain apprehenſion of death, ſome thoughts of fear; Faith ſhall ſtrait ſtep in, and drive away all thoſe weak fears; and raiſe up my heart to a cheerful expectation of ſo gainful, and happy a change: Nature ſhews me the gaſtfineſs of Death; Faith ſhews me the tranſcendency of Heavenly Glory; Nature repreſents to me a rotten Carkaſes; Faith preſents me with a glorious Soul: Shortly, Nature ſtartels at the ſight of

Death;

Death; Faith out-faces and overcomes it, ſo then, I who at the firſt bluſh could ſay, Ecclus. 41. 1. *O Death how bitter is thy remembrance*; can now upon my deliberate thoughts, ſay, Philip. 1. 23. *I deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt.*

LXXXIIII.

In the carraige of our holy profeſſion, God can neither abide us cowardly, nor indiſcreet: The ſame mouth that bad us, when we are perſecuted in one City, flee into another, ſaid alſo; *he that will ſave his life*, ſhall looſe it; we may neither cloak cowardice with a pretended diſcretion; nor loſe our diſcretion in a raſh courage; He that is moſt skilful and moſt valiant, may in his combat traverſe his ground for an advantage; and the ſtoutest Commander may fall flat to avoyd a Cannon-ſhot; True Chriſtian wiſdom, and not carnal fear, is that, wherewith we muſt conſult for advice, when to stand to it; and when to give back. On the one ſide, he dies honourably that falls in Gods quarrel; he that flies may fight again; Even our bleſſed leader that came purpoſely to give his Life for the World,

yet

yet when he found that he was laid for in *Judea*, flees into *Galilee*. The practise of some Primitive Christians, that, in an ambition of Martyrdom went to seek out and challenge dangers and death, is more worthy of our wonder, and applause, than our imitation. It shall be my resolution to be warily thrifty in managing my life, when God offers me no just cause of hazard; and to be willingly profuse of my bloud, when it is called for by that Saviour, who was not sparing of shedding his most precious bloud for me.

LXXXV.

He had need to be well under-laid, that knows how to entertain the time and himself with his own thoughts: Company, variety of imployments, or recreations, may wear out the day with the emptiest hearts; but when a man hath no society but of himself no task to set himself upon, but what arises from his own bosome; surely; if he have not a good stock of former notions or an inward mint of new, he shall soon run out of all, and (as some forlorn bankrupt) grow weary of himself: Hereupon

is that men of barren, and unexercised hearts can no more live without company, then fish out of the water; And those Heremites, and other Votaries, which professing only devotion, have no mental abilites to set themselves on work, are fain to tire themselves and their unwelcome hours, with the perpetual repetitions of the same orisons, which are now grown to a tedious, and heartless formality: Those contemplative spirits that are furnished with gracious abilities, and got into acquaintance with the God of Heaven, may and can lead a Life (even in the closest restraint, or wildest solitariness,) neerest to Angelical; but those, which neither can have *Mary*'s Heart, nor will have *Martha*'s hand. must needs be unprofitable to others, and wearisome to themselves.

LXXXVI.

There is nothing more easy than to be a Christian at large; but the beginnings of a strict and serious Christianity are not without much difficulty; for Nature affects a loose kind of liberty, which it cannot indure to have restrained: neither fares it otherwise

wiſe with it, then with ſome wild Colt; which at the firſt taking up, ſtings and plunges, and will ſtand on no ground; but after it hath been ſome while diſciplin'd at the Poſt, is grown tractable, and quietly ſubmits either to the ſaddle, or the collar. The firſt is the worſt; afterwards that which was tolerable, will prove eaſie, and that Which was eaſie will be found pleaſant. For in true practical Chriſtianity, there is a more kindly and better liberty. Gal: 1, 1. *Stand faſt* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you free:* Lo here a liberty of Chriſt's making, and therefore both juſt, and excellent: for what other is this liberty then a freedome, as from the tyranny of the law, ſo from the bondage of ſin. Rom. 6. 18. *Being then made free from ſin* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *ye became the ſervants of righteouſneſs*: Here are two maſters under one of which every ſoul muſt ſerve; either ſin or righteouſneſs: if we are bond--men to the other; we ſay truly, the ſervice of God (that is righteouſneſs) is perfect freedom: but to be free to ſin is a perfect bondage

and to ſerve ſin is no other than a vaſ-
ſillage to the devil from this bondage,
Chriſt only can free us! Joh. 8. 46.
If the Son ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be
free indeed. And we are no Chriſtians,
unleſs we be thus freed: and being thus
freed, we ſhall rejoyce in the pleaſant
fetters of our voluntary and cheerful
obedience to righteouſneſs; neither would
we for a world return to thoſe gieves
and manacles of ſin, which we once held
our moſt dear and comely ornaments:
and can truly ſay, Pſal. 31. 8. *Thou haſt*
ſet my feet in a large room. Pſal. 119. 45.
I will walk at liberty, for I ſeek thy
precepts.

LXXXVII.

I cannot but pity and lament the con-
dition of thoſe Chriſtians who for the
hope of a little earthly droſs, do willingly
put themſelves for a continuance out of
the pale of Gods Church: What do they
do, if we ſee, but caſt themſelves quite out of the
almightys protection; who hath not
bound himſelf to follow them out of his
own walks: or to ſeek them out amongſt
Turks and Infidels? well may we ſay

to them (as to the chief Paſtor of Pergamus) Revel. 2. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwelleſt, even where Satans ſeat is*; but have they any reaſon to expect that he ſhould dwell with them there, under the reign of that Prince of darkneſs? Theſe men put upon themſelves that hard meaſure, which the man after Gods own heart complains as to be put upon him as his worſt enemies: Pſal. 120. 5. *Wo is me that I am conſtrained to dwell with Meſech, and to have my habitation in the Tents of Keder*: That holy man could in the bitterneſs of his ſoul inveigh againſt his perſecutor for no other terms then theſe men offer to themſelves: 1 Sam. 26. 19. *Curſed be they before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord: ſaying, go ſerve other gods.* I ſpeak not of thoſe, who carry God along with them in his ordinance; all earths are alike to us, where we may freely enjoy his preſence: but of thoſe ſtraglers, who care not to live without God, ſo they may be befriended by Mammon. How ill a match theſe poor men make

make for themſelves, I ſend them to their Saviour to learn; Matt. 16. 26. *What is a man profited if he ſhall gain the whole world; and loſe his own ſoul; or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* God forbid, I ſhould give their ſouls for loſt, but I muſt ſay they are hazarded; for herein doubtleſs, they tempt God, who hath not promiſed to keep them in any other, than their juſt ways; and they do in a ſort tempt and challenge Satan, to draw them on either to a love of error and impiety, or at leaſt to a cooling of their care and love of truth: How unlike are theſe men to that wiſe merchant in the Goſpel; *Matt.*13 .45,46. He ſold all that he had to buy the pearl of great price: they ſell the pearl to buy a little worthleſs merchandize. As the greateſt part of their trafick ſtands upon exchange; ſo I heartily wiſh they would make this one exchange more; of leſs care of their wealth, for more care of their Souls.

LXXXVIII.

Even when *Joſeph* was a great Lord in *Egypt*, ſecond to none but *Pharaoh*, and

had the command of that richeſt Country of the World; yet then his old Father *Jacob* thought his poor parcel of *Sechem* worthy to be bequeathed to him, and embraced of him, as a noble Patrimony; becauſe it was in the Promiſed Land, and the Legacy of a dying Father: How juſtly do I admire the faith both of the Father and Son in this Donation! *Jacob* was now in *Goſhen*, *Shechem* was in *Canaan*; neither was the Father now in the preſent poſſeſſion; nor were the ſons in ſome Ages to enjoy it: It was four hundred and thirty years that *Iſrael* muſt be a ſojourner in a ſtrange Country, ere they ſhall enter into the promiſed Land, *Exod* 12. 41. yet now, as foreſeeing the future poſſeſſion, which his poſterity ſhould take of this ſpot of Earth, ſo long after, *Jacob* gives *Shechem* to *Joſeph*, and *Joſeph* apprehends it as a rich bleſſing, as the double portion of the divided Primogeniture: Infidelity is purblind, and can ſee nothing but that which is hard at hand; Faith is quick-ſighted, and diſcerns the events of many Centuries of years, yea of Ages to come; *Abraham* ſaw his Savi-

our

urs day, and rejoyced to ſee it, a thou-
and nine hundred and fourty years off;
and *Adam* (before him) almoſt four thou-
and years. As to God all things are pre-
ent, even future, ſo to thoſe that by a
irely faith partake of him: Why do I not
y that faith ſee my Saviour returning in
s Heavenly magnificence, as truly as now
ee the Heaven whence he ſhall come;
nd my body as verily raiſed from the
uſt, and become glorious, as now I ſee it
eak and decrepit, and falling into the
uſt?

LXXXIX.

True knowledg cauſeth Appetite and de-
re; For the Will follows the underſtand-
g; whatſoever that apprehends to be
ood for us, the affective part inclines to it:
o man can have any regard to an un-
own good: If an hungry man did not
ow that food would refreſh and nou-
h him, or the thirſty that drink would
tisfie him, or the naked that Fire would
arm him, or the ſick that Phyſick would
cover him: none of theſe would affect
eſe ſuccors: And according to our ap-
rehenſion of the goodneſs and uſe of theſe

helps, ſo is our appetite towards them: For the object of the will is a known good, either true, or appearing ſo: And if our experience can tell us of ſome that can ſay, with her in the Poet; I ſee and approve better things, but follow the worſe: It is not for that evil, as evil, (much leſs as worſe) can fall into the will; but, that their appetite over-carries them to a miſconceit of a particular good; ſo as, howſoever in a generality, they do confuſedly aſſent to the goodneſs of ſome holy act, or object, yet upon the preſent occaſion, (here and now, as the School ſpeaketh) their ſenſitive appetite hath prevailed to draw them to a perſuaſion, that this pleaſure, or that profit is worthy to be imbraced: Like as our firſt Parents had a general apprehenſion that it was good to obey all the commands of their Creator; but when it came to the forbidden fruit; now their eye, and their ear, and their heart tell them, it is good for them, both for pleaſure, and for the gain of knowledg, to taſt of that forbidden tree: So then, the miſcarriage is not in that they affect that which they think not to be good;

good; but in that they think that to be good which is not; for alas, for one true good there are many ſeeming, which delude the Soul with a fair ſemblance: As a man in a generality eſteems Silver above Braſs, but when he meets with a ruſty piece of Silver, and a cleer piece of Braſs, he chooſes rather the clear Braſs than the Silver defaced with ruſt: Surely, it is our ignorance that is guilty of our cool neglect of ſpiritual good; if we did know how ſweet the Lord is, in his ſure promiſes, in his unfailing mercies, we could not but long after him, and remain unſatisfied till we find him ours: would God be pleaſed to ſhine in our hearts by the light of the true knowledg of himſelf, we could not have cauſe to complain of want of heat in our affections towards his infinite goodneſs.

Did we but know how ſweet and delectable, Chriſt, the Heavenly *Manna*, is, we could not but hunger after him; and we could not hunger, and not be ſatisfied; and in being ſatisfied, bleſſed.

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XC.

Thoſe which we miſ-cal goods, are but in their nature, indifferent, and are either good or evil as they are affected, as they are uſed; Indeed, all their malignity, or virtue, is in the mind, in the hand of the poſſeſſour; Riches ill got, ill kept, ill ſpent, are but the Mammon of iniquity; but if well, *the Crown of the Wiſe is their riches*, Prov. 14. 24. how can it be amiſs to have much, when he that was the richeſt man of the Eaſt, was the holieſt? Job. 1. 1, 3. Yea, when God himſelf is juſtly ſtiled the poſſeſſour of Earth? How can it be amiſs to have little; Heaven, and when our Saviour ſayes: Luke. 6. 20. *Bleſſed are ye poor:* And if from that divine mouth, we hear a wo to the rich, *Luk.* 6. 25. *Mark.* 10. 24. 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. himſelf interprets it of them that truſt in riches: If our riches poſſeſs us, inſtead of our poſſeſſing them, we have changed our God, and loſt our ſelves; but if we have learnt to uſe our wealth, and not enjoy it, we may be no leſs gracious than rich: If a rich man have a large and humble heart, and a juſt hand, he inherits the bleſſing of the poor:

If

a poor man have a proud heart, and a theeviſh hand, he carryes away the two from the rich: Prov. 30. 9. *Riches* (ſaith wiſe *Solomon*) *make themſelves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven*: So as we may uſe the matter, our ſouls may fly thitherward with them; *If we do good, and be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up in ſtore for ourſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life.* 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. Let me ſay with *Agur*, Prov. 38. *Give me neither poverty, nor riches*; but whetherſoever God gives, I am both thankful and indifferent, ſo as whiles I am rich in eſtate, I may be poor in ſpirit, and whiles I am poor in eſtate, I may be rich in grace.

XCI.

Had I been in the ſtreets of *Jericho*, ſure, me thinks, I ſhould have juſtled with *Zacheus* for the Sycomore, to ſee Jeſus; and ſhould have bleſſed my eyes for ſo happy a proſpect: and yet, I conſider that many a one ſaw his face on earth, which ſhall never ſee his glory in Heaven: and I hear

the Apoſtle ſay, 2 Cor. 5. 16. *Though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him ſo no more.* O for the eyes of a *Stephen*, Act. 7. 55, 56. that *ſaw the Heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right hand of God.* That proſpect did as much tranſcend this of *Zacheus*, as Heaven is above Earth; celeſtial glory above humane infirmity: And why ſhould not the eyes of my faith behold the ſame object which was ſeen by *Stephen*'s bodily eyes? I ſee thee, O Saviour, I ſee thee, as certainly, though not ſo clearly: Do thou ſharpen, and fortifie, theſe weak eyes of mine, that in *thy light I may ſee light*, Pſal. 36. 9.

XCII.

How gracious a word was that which God ſaid to *Iſrael, I have called thee by thy name*, and *thou art mine*, Iſa. 43. 1. he that impoſed that name upon *Jacob*, makes familiar uſe of it to his poſterity: Neither is the caſe ſingular, but univerſally common to all his ſpiritual iſſue. There is not one of them, whom he doth not both call by his name, and challenge for his own, Pſa. 147. 4. *He* that *tells the number of the ſtars, and*

calls

calls *them all by their names*; hath also a name for every of these earthly luminaries; He who brought all other living creatures unto man, to see how he would call them, and would make use of *Adam*'s appellation, *Gen.* 2. 19, 20. reserved the nameing of man to himself; neither is there any one of his innumerous posterity, whom he knows not by name: But it is one thing to take notice of their names; another thing to call them by their names; that denotes his omniscience; this his speciality of favor: none are thus graced but the true Sons of *Isreal*. As Gods children do not content themselves with a confused knowledg of a Deity, but rest not till they have attained a distinct apprehension of their God, as he hath revealed himself to man; so doth God again to them; It is not enough that he knows them in a general view as in the throng, wherein we see many faces, none distinctly; but he singles them out in a familiar kind of severalty both of knowledg and respect: As then he hath names for the several Stars of Heaven, Job 9. 9. *Cimah, Cesil, Mazzaroth, &c.* And for the several Angels, Job. 38.

31.

31. *Gabriel*, *Raphael*, *Michael*, *&c.* and calls them by the proper names which he hath given them; ſo he doth to every of his faithful ones: Of one he ſaith, Luk. 1. 13. *Thou ſhalt call his name John:* Of another *Thou art Simon, thou ſhalt be called Cephas*, Joh. 1. 42. To one he ſays, *Zacheus, come down*; To another, *Cornelius, the prayers, and thine alms are come up*, Act. 10. 3, 4. In ſhort, there is no one of his, whom he doth not both know, and call by his name. What a comfort is this to a poor wretched man to think; Here I walk obſcure and contemptible upon earth, in a condition mean, and deſpiſed of men; but the great God of Heaven is pleaſed to take ſuch notice of me, as even from Heaven to call me by my name; and to ſingle me out for Grace, and Salvation; and not only to mention my name from above, in the gracious offer of his Ordinances, but to write it in the eternal Regiſter of Heaven? What care I to be inglorious, yea cauſeleſly Infamous with men, whiles I am thus honored by the King of glory?

XCIII.

It is the great wiſdom and providence of the Almighty, ſo to order the diſpoſitions and inclinations of men, that they affect divers and different works, and pleaſures: Some are for manuary trades, others for intellectual imployments: One is for the Land, another for the Sea; one for husbandry, another for merchandiſe; one is for Architecture, another for Veſtiary ſervices; one is for fiſhing, another for paſturage; and in the learned trades, one is for the miſtreſs of Sciences, Divinity; another for the Law, whether Civil, or Municipal; a third is for the ſearch of the ſecrets of Nature, and the skill and practice of Phyſick; and each one of theſe divides it ſelf into many differing varities; Neither is it otherwiſe in matter of pleaſures; one places his delight in following his Hawk and Hound, another in the harmony of Muſick; one makes his Garden his paradiſe, and enjoys the flouriſhing of his fair Tulips; another finds contentment in a choice Library; one loves his Bowl, or his Bow, another pleaſes himſelf in the patient paſtime

of

of his Angel: For ſurely, if all men affected one and the ſame trade of life, or pleaſure of recreation, it were not poſſible that they could live one by another: Neither could there be any uſe of commerce, whereby mans life is maintained; neither could it be avoided, but that the envy of the inevitable rivality, would cut each others throat. It is good reaſon we ſhould make a right uſe of this gracious and provident diſpenſation of the Almighty; and therefore that we ſhould improve our ſeveral diſpoſitions and faculties to the advancing of the common ſtock; and withal, that we ſhould neither encroach upon each others profeſſion, nor be apt to cenſure each others recreation.

XCIV.

He were very quick-ſighted that could perceive the growing of the graſs, or the moving of the ſhadow upon the Dial; yet when thoſe are done, every eye doth eaſily diſcern them. It is no otherwiſe in the progreſs of grace; which how it increaſeth in the Soul, and by what degrees, we cannot hope to perceive; but being grown, we may ſee it: It is the fault of many Chriſtians,

Christians, that they depend too much upon sense; and make that the judg of their spiritual estate; being too much dejected when they do not sensibly feel the proofs of their proficiency, and they resent proceedings of their regeneration: why do they not as well question the growth of their stature, because they do not see every day how much they are thriven? Surely, it must needs be that spiritual things are less perceptible than bodily; much more therefore must we in these, wait upon time for necessary conviction; and well may it suffice us, if upon an impartial comparing of the present measure of our knowledg, faith, obedience with the former, we can perceive our selves any whit sensibly advanced

XCV.

The wise Christian hath learned to value every thing according to its own worth; If we be too glad of these earthly things, it is the way to be too much afflicted with their loss; and whiles we have them, to be transported into pride and wantonness; If we esteem them too little, it is the way to an unthankful disrespect of the

the giver. Christianity carries the heart in a just equi-poise; when they come they are welcom without too much joy; and when they go, they part without tears: we may smile at these earthly favors, not laugh out; we may like them, but we must take heed of being in love with them: For love, of what kind soever it be, is not without the power of assimilation; If we love the world, we cannot but be worldly-minded Rom. 8. 5, 6. *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; and to be carnally minded is death:* Contrarily if we love God, we are made partakers of the divine nature; and we are such as we affect: If we be Christians in earnest; certainly the inner rooms of our hearts, which are the holy of holies, are reserved for the Almighty; the outer courts may be for the common resort of lawful cares and desires, they may come and go; but our God shall have his fixed habitation here for ever.

XCVI.

Nature is slie and cuning; neither is it possible to take her without a shift: The light huswife wipes her mouth, and it was not

not ſhe; *Prov.* 30. 20. *Rachel* hath ſtoln her fathers Teraphim, and the cuſtom of women is upon her: *Saul* reſerves all the fat cattle of the *Amalekites*; it is for a ſacrifice to the Lord thy God: Neither is it ſo only in excuſing an evil done, but in waving a good to be done: I am not eloquent, ſaith *Moſes*; ſend by him, by whom thou ſhouldſt ſend; *Pharaoh* will kill me; there is a lyon in the way, ſaith the Sluggard: I have marryed a wife, I cannot come, ſaith the ſenſual Gueſt. If I give I ſhall want; If I make a ſtrict profeſſion, I ſhall be cenſured: Whereas true Grace is on the one ſide down right, and ingenuous in its Confeſſions; not ſparing to take ſhame to it ſelf, that it may give glory to God; on the other ſide, reſolutely conſtant to its holy purpoſes. *I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord: If I periſh, I periſh: I am ready not to be bound only; but alſo to die at* Jeruſalem *for the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* It is not heard therefore for us to know what miſtreſs we ſerve: If our care and endeavor be by witty evaſions to ſhuffle off both evil and good, we are the vaſſals of nature; but if we ſhall with an humble

humble penitence acknowledg our evils and ſet our ſelves with firm reſolutions upon the tasks of good, we are under Grace, in a way to glory.

XCVII.

It is good for a man not always to keep his eyes at home, but ſometimes to look abroad at his neighbors; and to compare his own condition with the worſe eſtate of others: I know I deſerve no more than the meaneſt, no better than the worſt of men; yet how many do I ſee, and hear to lie groaning upon their ſick beds, in great extremity of torment, whereas I walk up and down in a competency of health? How many do I ſee ready to famiſh, and forced to either beg, or ſtarve, whereas I eat my own bread? How many lie roaring in Goals and Dungeons, or are driven to wander in unknown deſarts, or amongſt people whoſe langage they underſtand not, whereas I enjoy home and liberty? How many are ſhrieking under ſcourges and racks, whereas I ſit at eaſe? And if I ſhall caſt mine eyes upon my ſpiritual condition; alas, how many do I ſee lie in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death?

Mal.

Mal. 4. 2. Whereas the Son of Righteousneſs hath ariſen to me with healing in his wings? How many lie in a woful bondage under ſin and Satan, whereas my Saviour hath freed me from thoſe helliſh chains, and brought me to the glorious liberty of the ſons of God? how many are miſerably miſled into the dangerous by-paths of error, whereas he hath graciouſly kept me in the plain and ſure way of his ſaving Truth? If we do not ſometimes make theſe (not proud, but thankful) compariſons, and look upon ourſelves, not with direct beams, but by reflection upon others, we ſhall never be ſenſible enough of our own mercies.

XCVIII.

The true Chriſtian is in a very happy condition, for no man will envy him, and he can envy no body: None will envy him, for the world cannot know how happy he is; How happy in the favor of a God; how happy the enjoying of that Favor: Thoſe ſecret delights that he finds in the preſence of his God; thoſe comfortable Pledges of Love, and mutual interchanges of bleſſed Intereſt which paſs between them,

them, are not for worldy hearts to conceive; and no man will envy an unknown happineſs. On the other ſide, he cannot envy the worlds greateſt favorite under Heaven; for he well knows how fickle and uncertain that mans felicity is; he ſees him Walking upon Ice, and perceives every foot of his ſliding, and threatning a fall; and hears that brittle pavement, at every ſtep, crakling under him, and ready to give way to his ſwallowing up: and withal, finds if thoſe pleaſures of his could be conſtant and permanent, how poor and unſatisfying they are, and how utterly unable to yield true contentment to the ſoul. The Chriſtian therefore, whiles others look upon him with pity and ſcorn, laughs ſecretly to himſelf in his boſom, as well knowing there is none but he, truly happy.

XCIX.

It was an high and honorable embaſſy, whereon the Angel *Gabriel* was ſent down to the bleſſed Virgin; that ſhe ſhould be Mother of her Saviour: Neither was that inferior of the glorious Angel that brought the joyful tidings of the incarnation and birth

birth of the Son of God, to the ſhepherds of *Bethlehem*; but a far more happy errand was that which the Lord Jeſus, after his Reſurrection, committed to the *Maries*; *Go to my brethren, and ſay to them, I aſcend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God.* Joh. 20. 17. Lo, he ſays not I am riſen, but I aſcend; as if he had forgot the Earth, whence he aroſe; and thought only on that Heaven whither he was going: Upon his *Eaſter*, his mind is on his Aſcenſion day. As there had been nothing but diſcomfort in death, without a Reſurrection; ſo there had been little comfort in a Reſurrection, without an Aſcenſion to glory. There is a contentment in the very act, I aſcend; even nature is ambitious; and we do all affect to mount higher; as to come down is a Death; but this height is, like the aſcendent, infinite, *I aſcend to my Father*: There was the glory which he put off in his humble Incarnation; there was the glory which he was now to reſume, and poſſeſs to all eternity.

And, as if Nature and Adoption could give a like intereſt, he puts both together; *My Father, and your Father: my God, and your*

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your God. His mercy vouchſafes to ſtile us Brethren; yet the diſtance is unmeaſureable, betwixt him, the Son of his eternal Eſſence, and us the naturally-wretched ſons of his gracious Election; yet, as if both he and we ſhould be co-heirs of the ſame bleſſedneſs (though not in the ſame meaſure) he ſays, *My Father, and your Father*: Firſt, my Father, then yours; and indeed therefore ours, becauſe his: It is in him that we are elected, that we are adopted: Without him, God were not only a ſtranger, but an enemy; It is the Son that muſt make us free; It is the Son that muſt make us ſons: If we be his, the Father cannot but be ours.

O the unſpeakable comfort and happineſs of a Chriſtian; In reſpect of his bodily nature, he cannot but ſay (with *Job to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my ſiſter* Job. 17. 15. In his ſpiritual right, God the Son hath here authorized him to ſay to the Almighty, *Thou art my Father*: And if nature ſhall, in regard of our frail and dying condition, whiningly ſay, *I deſcend to the grave*; Faith makes abundant amends in him, and can as cheerfully ſay

I aſcend to my Father: And what ſon (that is not altogether graceleſs) would not be glad to go to his father, though it were to a meaner houſe then his own; and therefore is ready to ſay, *I will deſcend to my Father*; How much more, when his many Manſions are infinitely glorious; and when all our happineſs conſiſts in his bleſſed Preſence, muſt we needs ſay, with a joy unſpeakable, and glorious, *I aſcend to my Father?*

C.

God made man the lord of his Creatures; he made him not a Tyrant; he gave the Creatures to man for his lawful uſe, not for his wanton cruelty: Man may therefore excerciſe his juſt ſovereignity over the beaſts of the field, and fowls of the air, and fiſhes of the ſea; not his lawleſs Will to their needleſs deſtruction, or torment: Had man made the Creature, he could but challenge an abſolute dominion over that work of his hands; but now that he is only a fellow Creature to the meaneſt worm, What an inſolent uſurpation is this, ſo licentiouſly to domineer over his follow-duſt? Yea, that great God, who gave

gave a Being to the creature; and there-
fore hath a full and illimited power over
his own workmanship, takes no pleasure
to make use of that power to the unneces-
sary vexation, and torture of what he hath
made: That all-wise and bountiful Crea-
tor, who hath put into the hands of man
the subordinate Dominion over all the
store of these inferior Elements, hath
made the limit of his command, not ne-
cessity only, but convenience too; but
man shall go beyond these bounds, and
will destroy the creature only, because
he will, and put it to pain, because it is
his pleasure; he abuseth his soveraignty
to a sinful imperiousness, and shall be ac-
countable for his cruelty. When the A-
postle, upon occasion of the Law for not
muzling the mouth of the Ox, askes, *Doth*
God take care for oxen? 1. Cor. 9. 9. Can
we think he meant to question the regard
that God hath to so useful a Creature? Do
we not hear the Psalmist say, *He giveth*
the beast his food, and to the young ravens
that cry? Ps. 147. 9. Do we not hear our
Saviour say, That not a *sparrow falls to the*
ground without our heavenly Father? Mat-

o. 29. And of how much more value is n Ox than many thouſands of Sparrows? s not the ſpeech therefore, both comparative and typical? Is the main care that God takes in that Law, for proviſion to be made for the beaſt; and doth he not rather nder that figure give order for the maintenance of thoſe ſpiritual Oxen, that labor the husbandry of the Almighty? Doubtſs, as even the ſalvage Creatures, *The ng lyons ſeek their meat from God*; Pſal. 04. 21, 26, 28. So they find it (from him due ſeaſon; *He openeth his hand and filh every Creature with good.* Is God ſo careful for preſerving, and ſhall man be ſo licentious in deſtroying them? *A righteous an* (ſaith *Solomon*) *regardeth the life of his aſt*; Prov. 12. 10. He is no better, therere, than a wicked man that regardeth it t: To offer violence to, and to take away e life from our Fellow-Creatures, without cauſe, is no leſs than tyranny: Surely, other meaſure ſhould a man offer to s beaſt, than that, which if his beaſt with *Balaam's*) could expoſtulate with n, he could well juſtifie to it; no other, n that man, if he had been made a

beaſt, would have been content ſhould have been offered by man to him; no other than he ſhall make account to anſwer to a common Creator. Juſtly do we ſmile at the niceneſs of the fooliſh *Manichees*, who made ſcruple to pull an herb or flower, and were ready to Preface apologies and excuſes for the reaping of their Corn, and grinding the grain they fed upon, as if theſe Vegetables were ſenſible of pain, and capable of our oppreſſion; but ſurely, for thoſe creatures which enjoying a ſenſitive life, forgo it with no leſs anguiſh and reluctation than ourſelves; and would be as willing to live, without harm, as their owners, they may well challenge both ſuch mercy and juſtice at our hands, as that in the uſage of them we may approve ourſelves to their Maker: Wherein I bluſh and grieve to ſee how far we are exceeded by *Turks* and *Infidels*; whom meer nature hath taught more tenderneſs to the poor brute Creatures, than we have learned from the holier rules of charitable Chriſtianity.

For my part, let me rather affect and applaud the harmleſs humor of that mi-

call

called Saint, who in an indiscreet humility called every Woolf his brother, and every Sheep, yea every Ant his sister, following himself with every thing that had life in it, as well as himself; then the tyrannical disposition of those men who take pleasure in the abuse, persecution, destruction of their Fellow-Creatures, upon no other quarrel, than because they live.

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Supernumeraries.

I.

THere is a ſatiety in all other (even the beſt) things that I either have, or doe: I can be eaſily apt to complain of being wearied, or cloyed with the ſame objects but in the thoughts of ſpiritual things, me thinkes, I can never have enough: For as there is infinite ſcope and variety of matter, wherein to employ my meditations; ſo in each one of them, there is ſuch mavellous depth, that I ſhould in vain hope, after all my exquiſiteſt ſearch, to reach unto the bottom: Yea the more I look upon the incomprehenſible Deity, in any one of his glorious attributes, or any one of his omnipotent works, of creation, government, redemption; the more I long to ſee, and the leſs am I ſatisfied in ſeeing: and now I find cauſe to bleſs that unſpeakable goodneſs, that he hath vouchſafed to give leave to his unworthy Creatures, to contemplate thoſe

those excellent glories, and those saving mysteries; and think my self happy in so gracious a liberty of exchanging them worthless thoughts of the world, for the dear and precious meditations of heavenly things; and now, how justly do I fall out with my wretched self, that I have given way to secular distractions? since my heart can be sometimes in Heaven, why should it not be alwayes there?

II.

What is this that I see? my Saviour in an Agony, and an Angel strengthening him? Oh the wonderful dispensation of the Almighty! That the eternal Son of God, who promised to send the comforter to his followers, should need comfort! That he, of whom the voice from Heaven said, *This is my well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, should be strugling with his Fathers wrath even to bloud! That the Lord of life should in a languishing horror: say, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death*! These, these, O Saviour, are the chastisements of our peace, which both thou wouldst suffer, and thy Fathers would inflict; The least touch of

one of thoſe pangs, would have been no leſs than an hell to me; the whole brunt whereof thou enduredſt for my ſoul; what a wretch am I, to grudg a little pain from, or for thee who wert content to undergo ſuch preſſure of torment for me, as ſqueezed from thee a ſweat of bloud! ſince my miſerable ſinfulneſs deſerved more load, than thou in thy merciful compaſſion wilt lay upon me, and thy pure nature, and perfect innocence merited nothing but love and glory.

In this ſad caſe, what ſervice is it that an Angel offers to do unto thee? [Lo there appears to thee *an Angel from Heaven, ſtrengthening* thee] ſtill more wonder! Art not thou, the God of Spirits; is it not thou, that gaveſt being, life, motion, power, glory to all the Angels of Heaven? Shall there be need of one ſingle created ſpirit to adminiſter ſtrength and comfort to his Creator? were this the errand; why did not all that bleſſed Chore of celeſtial ſpirits joyn their forces together in ſo high an imployment? Where are the multitudes of that heavenly hoſt, which at thy birth, ſung, *Glory to God in*

the

he higheſt, and on earth peace, Luk. 2. 13, 14. Where are thoſe Angels which miniſtred to thee after thy combat of temptations in the wilderneſs; Surely there was not ſo much uſe of their divine cordials in the deſart, as in the garden; O my God, and Saviour, thus thou wouldſt have it; It is thy holy Will that is the rule and reaſon of all thine actions, and events; Thou that wouldſt make uſe of the proviſion of men for thy maintenance on earth, wouldſt employ thy ſervants the Angels, for the ſupply of the conſolations; and thou that couldſt have commanded Legions of thoſe celeſtial ſpirits, wouldſt be ſerved by one; not, but that more were preſent, but that only one appeared; all the hoſt of them ever inviſibly attended thee, as God, but as man, one only preſents himſelf to thy bodily eyes: and thou, who madeſt thy ſelf, for our ſakes, *a little lower then the Angels*; Heb. 2. 9. Which thou madeſt, wouldſt humble thy ſelf to receive comfort from thoſe hands, to which thou gaveſt the capacity to bring it; It is no marvel, if that which was thy condeſcent, be our glory

and happineſs: I am not worthy, O God, to know what conflicts thou haſt ordained for my weakneſs; what ever they be, thou that haſt appointed thine Angels to be *miniſtring ſpirits* for the behoof of them *who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation*, Heb. 1. 14. Suffer not thy ſervant to want the preſence of thoſe bleſſed Emiſſaries of thine in any of his extremities; let them ſtand by his ſoul in his laſt agony, and after an happy Eluctation conveigh it to thy glory.

III.

Many a one hath ſtumbled dangerouſly at a wicked mans proſperity; and ſome have fallen deſperately into that ſin, which they have ſeen thrive in others hands: Thoſe carnal hearts know no other proof of good or evil but preſent events; eſteeming thoſe cauſes holy and juſt which are crowned with outward ſucceſs: not conſidering that it is one of the cunningeſt plots of hell, to win credit to bad enterpriſes by the faireſt iſſues; wherein, the Devil deales with unwary men, like ſome cheating gameſter, who having drawn in an unskilful and wealthy novice into play, ſuffers him to win a while at the firſt, that he

he may at the laſt, ſweep away all the ſtakes, and ſome rich mannors to boot: The fooliſh *Benjaminites* having twice won the field, begin to pleaſe themſelves with a fale conceit of *Gibehas* honeſty, and their own perpetual victories; but they ſhall ſoon find that theſe good ſpeed is but a pit-fall to entrap them in an enſuing deſtruction. It is a great judgment of God to puniſh ſinners with welfare; and to render their leud wayes proſperous: wherein, how contrary are the Almighties thoughts to theirs; their ſeeming bleſſings are his heavy curſe; and the ſmart of his ſtripes are a favor too good for them to enjoy, to judge wiſely of our condition, it is to be conſidered not ſo much how we fare, as upon what termes: If we ſtand right with Heaven, every croſs is a bleſſing, and every bleſſing a pledge of future happineſs: if we be in Gods disfavor, every of his benefits is a judgment; and every judgment makes way for perdition: For mee, let it be my care that my diſpoſition may be holy, and my actions righteous, let God undertake for the event.

IV.

It is no eaſie thing to perſuade a man that he is proud; every one profeſſes to hate that vice, yet cheriſhes it ſecretly in his boſom: for what is pride but an overweening of ourſelves? And ſuch is our natural ſelf-love, that we can hardly be drawn to believe that in any kind we think too well of our own: Now, this pride is ever ſo much more dangerous, as the thing which we over-prize is more excellent; and as our miſ-apprehenſion of it may be more diffuſive: To be proud of gay-cloathes, which is childiſh; or, to be proud of beauty, which is a womaniſh vice, hath in it more fondneſs than malignity; and goes no further than the breſt wherein it is conceived; finding no other entertainment in the beholders, then either ſmiles, or envy: but the pride of knowledg, or holy diſpoſitions of the ſoul, as it is of an higher nature, ſo it produceth commonly more perilous effects: for as it puffes up a man above meaſure; ſo it ſuffers not it ſelf to be kept in within the narrow bounds of his own thoughts, but violently burſts out to the

the extream prejudice of a world of men. *Only by pride cometh contention*, ſaith wiſe *Solomon*; Prov. 13. 10 Even purſe-pride is quarelous, domineering over the humble neighbourhood, and raiſing quarels out of trifles; but the ſpiritual arrogance is ſo much miſcheivous, as the ſoul is beyond all earthly pelf: For, when we are once come to advance, and admire our own judgments; we are firſt apt to hug our own inventions; then to eſteem them too precious to be ſmothered within our own cloſets: the world muſt know of how happy an iſſue we are delivered; and muſt applaud it, or abide a conteſtation, and expect a challenge. The faireſt paradoxes cannot paſs without a contradiction; it were ſtrange if ſome as bold, and forward wits as our own, ſhould not take up the gantlet: now the fray is begun; the multitude is divided; ſides are taken; the world is in an uproare, from skirmiſhes we grow to pitcht fields: the Church bleeds on both parts; and it were marvel, if kingdoms could be free.

But that which moſt notably evinceth the deceitfulneſs of mans heart in this behalf,

half, is, that this pride is too often lodged in thoſe breſts which are profeſſedly devoted to a godly and mortified lowlineſs: for, as for thoſe perſons which are meer fleſh, they are careleſly indifferent to error or truth; neither are at all moved with the ſucceſs of either; but the religious mind, when it is once poſſeſſed with the conceit of ſome ſingular and important truth revelated to it, and hid from the reſt of the world, is ready to ſay with the *Samaritan* Lepers; *I do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and* I *hold my peace*; 2. King. 7.9. And therefore makes it matter of conſcience to trouble the Church with a miſ-grounded novelty: Come we to the Teſt; Let me ask theſe miſ-guided ſouls that are no leſs confidently perſuaded of their own humility than Truth; Can it be any other than an height of pride, for a man to think himſelf wiſer than the whole Church of God upon earth? wiſer than the whole Church of God that hath been upon earth ever ſince the Apoſtles of Chriſt incluſively, in all ſucceſſions to this preſent time? Can they without much pride think they can look deeper into the great

great myſteries of Godlineſs, than thoſe bleſſed attendants of our Saviour, and their gracious ſucceſſors, the holy martyrs, the godly and religious guides of Gods Church, in all the following ages? Had not they then the ſame God, the ſame Scriptures, the illuminations of the ſame Spirit? Can they imagine it leſs than inſolent to attribute more to their own private opinion, than to the conſtant judgment and practiſe of the whole Chriſtian world in all ſucceſſions of Generations? Can they ſuppoſe themſelves in their ſingle capacity (though neither Prophets, nor Prophets ſons) meet Judges or Queſtioniſts of thoſe matters of Faith which the general Councils of the purer times have unanimouſly agreed upon as the main principles of Chriſtianity? Can they think themſelves priviledged by the liberty of propheſying to coyn new articles, to deface old? Surely, if the hand of pride be not in all this, I ſhall never deſire to be acquainted with humility; ſo as it is too plain, that a man may be exceeding proudly and not know it; this vicious habit lurks cloſe in the ſoul, and unleſs it

diſcover

diſcover it ſelf by ſome ſcarce-diſcernable effects (which break out now and then, eſpecially, upon occaſions of oppoſition) is rather more concealed from the owner, than from the eyes of a ſtranger: But (if ever,) it bewrayes it ſelf in the affectation of undue eminence, ſcornful under-valuation of others merits, obſtinacy in opinion, ſharpneſs of cenſures, and impatience of contradiction; Of all theſe the world is commonly no leſs guilty of the common miſeries.

Lord deliver us from our pride, and our contentions will die alone.

V.

What a ſtrange praiſe and priviledge is that which is given to *Enoch*, above all thoſe generations of men that peopled the firſt world; of whom the Spirit of God ſayes; *Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him*; Gen. 5. 24. Doubtleſs, amongſt all thoſe ſucceſſive families of the ſons of *Seth*, there were many religious and well-affected ſouls; yet there was no one of them that had this character ſet upon him, that he walked with God, but he: Whether it were, that God did in

in a more open and entire way reveal himſelf to that exemplary Saint; or whether that holy man did in a more cloſe and familiar faſhion, converſe with the inviſible Deity, the preſence was certain, and the acknowledgment mutual: neither was this walk ſhort, for a turn, and away; but conſtant, and continual; even for the ſpace of three hundred years; *Gen.* 5. 22. And what? did the bleſſed man retire to ſome deſart, far from all humane ſociety, that he might enjoy this heavenly company alone? Did he this-while caſt off all ſecular thoughts, and abdicate all the care of his family; Neither this, nor that; for in this ſpace wherein he walked with his God; he both begat ſons and daughters, and bred them like the children of ſuch a father; as one that knew to make the world ſubordinate, not oppoſite to its maker: and had learn'd to reconcile the uſe of the Creature with the fruition of the Creator: What then were the ſteps of this walk, but pious thoughts, heavenly affections, fervent love, reverential fear, ſpiritual joy, holy deſires, divine raviſhments of ſpirit; ſtrict obediences,

diences, aſſiduous devotions, faithful aſſiances, gracious engagements, firme reſolutions, and effectual indeavors of good, and whatſoever might work a dearneſs of reſpect betwixt the ſoul, and the God of Spirits: O God that which thou promiſedſt (as a reward) to thoſe few Saints of *Sardis*, *Revel* 3. 4. that had not *defiled their garments*, thou haſt before hand fully performed to this eminent worthy of the firſt world; he walked with thee in white, in the white of innocence here; and in the ſhining robes of glory above; ſo thou haſt told us, *He was not, for God took him*: Lo; being, and good were wont to paſs for convertible; but here, *Enoch*'s not-being, in his bleſſedneſs; he was not at all here; that he might be perfectly above; The beſt being on earth is but miſerable; even *Enoch*'s walk with God cannot exempt him from ſorrows; he muſt ceaſe to be, that he may begin to be happy; He was then happy, not for that he was not; (a meer privation of being can be not other than the worſt of evils) but for that God took him: The God with whom he walk'd ſo long upon earth,

earth, takes him away from the earth to himſelf, for eternity: Here below though he walkt with God, yet withall he converſed with ſinful men, whoſe wickedneſs could not but many a time vex his righteous ſoul; now he is freed from all thoſe ſpiritual annoyances; enjoying only the glorious preſence and viſion of the divine Majeſty, the bleſſed Angels, and the Saints, co-partners of the ſame immortality. There can be no doubt but that the ſouls of his holy predeceſſors *Adam*, *Abel*, *Seth*, returned to the God that gave them; but had not *Enoch* been bleſſed with a peculiar conveiance to his glory, it had not been ſaid, That *God took him*: were only the ſpirit of *Enoch* yielded up in the way of an ordinary death, the man had not been taken; now, whole *Enoch*, body and ſoul, is tranſlated to an heavenly life. *Eccluſ.* 44. 16.

His father *Jared*, and his ſon *Methuſelah*, went to God in the common way of men, by a ſeparation of the ſpirit from the fleſh, but for him, God took him; and clothed him living with immortality: I find none but him and

Elijah

Elijah that were thus fetcht to their Heaven: It will be happy for us, if we may paſs in the common road to bleſſedneſs; O God, give me to walk cloſe and conſtantly with thee, and what end thou pleaſeſt; let my body paſs through all the degrees of corruption, ſo that my ſoul may be immediately glorious.

THE

THE BREATHINGS OF THE DEVOUT SOUL.

I.

BLeſſed Lord God; thou calleſt me to obedience; and fain would I follow thee: but what good can this wretched heart of mine be capable of, except thou put it there? thou know'ſt I cannot ſo much as wiſh to think well without thee; I have ſtrong powers to offend thee, my ſins are my own; but whence ſhould I have any inclination to good but from thee, who art only, and all good? Lord, work me to what thou requireſt, and then require what thou wilt.

II.

Lord God, whither need I go to ſeek thee? Thou art ſo with me, as that I cannot move but in thee. I look up to heaven; there I know thy Majeſtie moſt manifeſts it ſelf; but withall, I know that being here thou art never out of thy heaven, for it is thy preſence only that makes heaven: Oh give my to enjoy thee in this loweſt region of thine heavenly habitation; and as in reſpect of my natural being, I live and move in thee, ſo let me not live and move ſpiritually, but with thee, and to thee.

III.

Whither now, O whither do ye rove O my thoughts? Can ye hope to find reſt in any of theſe ſublunary contentments, Alas! how can they yield any ſtay to you, that have no ſettlement in themſelves? Is there not enough in the infinite good to take you up; but that ye will be wandring after earthly vanities! Oh my Lord, how juſtly mighteſt thou caſt me off with ſcorn, for caſting any affective glances upon ſo baſe a rival! Truly, Lord, I am aſhamed of this my hateful inconſtancy; but it is thou only

that

that muſt remedy it; O thou that art the father of mercies pity my wildneſs, and weak diſtractions: Take thou my heart to thee, it is thine own; keep it with thee, tye it cloſe to thee by the cords of love, that it may not ſo much as caſt down an eye upon this wretched and periſhing world.

IV.

Lord, I confeſs to my ſhame, thou art a great loſer by me; for, beſides my not improving of thy favors, I have not kept even-reckonings with thee; I have not juſtly tallied up thy ineſtimable benefits: Thy very privative mercies are both without, and beyond my account; for every evil that I am free from, is a new bleſſing from thee; That I am out of bondage, that I am out of pain and miſery; that I am out of the dominion of ſin; out of the tyranny of Satan; out of the agonies of afflicted ſoul; out of the torments of hell: Lord, how unſpeakable mercies are theſe? Yet, when did I bleſs thee for any of them? Thy poſitive bounties I can feel, but with a benummed and imperfect ſence. Lord, do thou enlarge, and intenerate

rate my heart; make me truly ſenſible, as of my good received; ſo of my eſcaped evils; and take thou to thy ſelf the glory of them both.

V.

Ah my Lord God, what heats and colds do I feel in my ſoul? Sometimes I find my ſelf ſo vigorous in grace, that no thought of doubt dare ſhew it ſelf; and me thinks I durſt challenge my helliſh enemies; another while I feel my ſelf ſo deject and heartleſs, as if I had no intereſt in the God of my ſalvation, nor never had received any certain pledges of his favor: What ſhall I ſay to this various diſpoſition? Whether, Lord, is it my wretchedneſs to ſuffer my ſelf to be rob'd of thee, for the time, by temptation? or whether is this the courſe of thy proceedings in the diſpenſation of thy graces to the ſons of men; that thou will have the breathings of thy Spirit, as where, ſo how, and when thou pleaſeſt? Surely, O my God, if I did not know thee conſtant to thine everlaſting mercies, I ſhould be utterly diſheartned with theſe ſad intervals; now, when my ſenſe

failes

ſailes me, I make uſe of my faith; and am no leſs ſure of thee, even when I feel thee not, than when I find the cleareſt evidences of thy gracious preſence. Lord, ſhine upon me with the light of thy countenance (if it may be) alwayes; but, when ever that is clouded, ſtrengthen thou my faith; ſo ſhall I be ſafe, even when I am comfortleſs.

VI.

O my God, I am juſtly aſhamed to think what favors I have received from thee, and what poor returns I have made to thee: Truly, Lord, I muſt needs ſay, thou haſt thought nothing either in earth, or in heaven too good for me; and I, on the other ſide, have grudg'd thee that weak and worthleſs obedience which thou haſt required of me: Alas, what pleaſure could I have done to thee, who art infinite, if I had ſacrificed my whole ſelf to thee, as thou commandeſt? Thou art, and wilt be thy ſelf, though the world were not; it is I only, that could be a gainer by this happy match; which in my own wrong I have unthankfully neglected; I ſee it is not ſo much what we have,

have, as how we imploy it: O thou haſt been ſo bountiful, in heaping thy rich mercies upon me, vouchſafe to grant me, yet one gift more; give me grace and power to improve all thy gifts to the glory of the giver; otherwiſe, it had been better for me to have been poor, than ingrateful.

VII.

Ah Lord, What ſtrugling have I with my weak fears? how do I anticipate my evils by diſtruſt? What ſhall I do when I am old? How ſhall I be able to indure pain? How ſhall I paſs through the horrid gates of death? Oh my God, Where is my faith that I am thus ſurpriſed? Had I not thee to up-hold, and ſtrengthen my ſoul, well might I tremble and ſink under theſe cares; but now, that I have the aſſurance of ſo ſtrong an helper, as commands all the powers of heaven, earth, and hell, what a ſhame is it for me to give ſo much way to my wretched infidelity, as to puniſh my ſelf with the expectation of future evils? Oh for the victory that overcomes the world, *even our faith*; 1 Joh. 5. 14. Thou, *O God*, art my

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y refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help trouble; therefore will I not fear though the rth be removed, and though the mountains carried into the midſt of the Sea; Pſal. 6. 1.

VIII.

Lord, I made account my dayes ſhould ve been but an inch; but thou haſt made em *a ſpan long*; Pſal. 39. 6. having drawn ut the length of a crezie life beyond e period of my hopes: It is for ſome-ing, ſure, that thou haſt thus long reſ-ed me from my grave, which look't r me many years ago: Here I am, O y God, attending thy good pleaſure; hou know'ſt beſt what thou haſt to do ith me; Diſpoſe of me as thou wilt; nly make me faithful in all thy ſervi-es, reſolute to truſt my ſelf with thee in ll events; careful to be approved of thee all my wayes: and crown my decayed ge with ſuch fruits as may be pleaſing o thee, and available to the good of any; Laſtly, let me live to thee, and ie in thee.

IX.

How oft, Lord, have I wondred to

ſee the ſtrange carriage of thine adminiſtration of theſe earthly affaires; and therein to ſee thy marvellous wiſdom, power, goodneſs, in fetching good out of evil! Alas, we wretched men are apt enough to fetch the worſt of evils, out of the greateſt good, *turning the grace of thee our God into wantonneſs:* Jude 4. But how have I ſeen thee, of liveleſs ſtones to raiſe up children to *Abraham*, of ſinners to make Saints? Out of a deſperate confuſion to fetch order; out of a bloudy war, an happy peace; out of reſolutions of revenge, love; out of the rock, water; out of a perſecuter, an Apoſtle? How can I be diſcouraged with unlikelihoods, when I ſee thee work by contraries? It is not for me, O my God, to examine or pre-judge thy counſels; take what wayes thou wilt, ſo thou bring me to thine own end; all paths ſhall be direct that ſhall lead me to bleſſedneſs.

X,

How many good purpoſes, O my God, have I taken up, and let fall to the ground again without effect? How teeming hath this barren womb of my heart been of

falſe

false conceptions? But especially, when thy hand hath been smart and heavy upon me in mine affliction, how have I basked my self with duties, and revived my firme resolutions of more strict obedience, which yet upon the continuance of my better condition, I have slackened? Lord, it is from thee that I purposed well; it is from my own sinful weakness that I failed in my performances; If any good come me, the will and the deed must be both thine, *Prov.* 16. 1. *The* very *preparations of the heart* are from thee; And if I have *devised my way*, it must be thou that *directest my steps*, Prov. 16. 9. O God, do thou ripen and perfect all the good motions that thou puttest into my soul; and make my health but such as my sickness promised.

XI.

Every man, Lord, is unwilling that his name should die; we are all naturally ambitious of being thought on when we are gone; those that have not living monuments to perpetuate them, affect to have dead; if *Absolon* have not a son, he will yet erect a pillar: yet when we have

all done, time eates us out at the last? *There is no remembrance of the wise more then of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is, in the dayes to come shall all be forgotten*, Eccles. 2. 16. O God, let it be my care and ambition, what ever become of my memory here below, that my name may be recorded in Heaven.

XII.

Thy wise providence, O God, hath so ordered it, that every mans mind seeks and finds contentment in some thing; otherwise it could not be (since we must meet with so frequent crosses in the world) but that mans life would be burdensome to him; one takes pleasure in his Hawke or Hound; another in his Horses and Furnitures; one in fair Buildings; another in pleasant walks and beautiful Gardens; one in travailing abroad; another in the enjoying of the profits and pleasures of his Home; one in the increase of his Wealth; another in the titles of his Honor; one in a comfortable Wife; another in loving and dutiful children, but when all is done, if there be not somwhat else to uphold the heart in the evil day, it must sink. O God,

God, do thou poſſeſs my ſoul of thee; let me place all my felicity in the fruition of thine infinite goodneſs; ſo I am ſure the world hath not power to render me other than happy.

XIII.

O Lord God, under how oppoſite aſpects do I ſtand, from the world? how variouſly am I conſtrued by men? One pities my condition, another praiſes my patience; One favors me out of the opinion of ſome good that he thinks he ſees in me; another diſlikes me for ſome imagined evil: What are the eyes, or tongues of men to me? Let me not know what they ſay, or think of me, and what am I the better or worſe for them? they can have no influence upon me without my own apprehenſion: All is in what termes I ſtand with thee, my God; if thou be pleaſed to look upon me with the eye of thy tender mercy and compaſſion, What care I to be unjuſtly brow-beaten of the world? If I may be bleſſed with thy favour, let me be made a gazing-ſtock to the world, to Angels, and to men.

XIV.

XIV.

Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth. What is it which thou wouldſt have me do that I may find reſt to my ſoul? I am willing to exerciſe my ſelf in all the acts of piety which thou requireſt; I am ready to faſt, to pray, to read, to hear, to meditate, to communicate, to give alms, to exhort, admoniſh, reprove, comfort where thou bid'ſt me; and if there by any other duty appertaining to devotion, or mercy, let me ſerve thee in it: But, alas, O my God, howſoever I know theſe works are in themſelves well pleaſing unto thee, yet as they fall from my wretchedneſs, they are ſtained with ſo many imperfections, that I have more reaſon to crave pardon for them, than to put confidence in them; and if I could performe them never ſo exquiſitely, yet one ſin is more than enough to daſh all my obedience. I ſee then, O Lord, I well ſee there is no act that I can be capable to do unto thee, wherein I can find any repoſe; it muſt be thine act to me, which only can effect it; It is thy gracious word, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and*

are

are heavily laden, and I will give you rest; Matth. 11. 28. Lo, this reſt muſt be thy gift, not my earning; and what can be freer than gift? Thou giveſt it then, but to thoſe that come to thee; not to thoſe that come not; To thoſe that come to thee laden and labouring under the ſenſe of their own wretchedneſs; not to the proud, and careleſs; O Saviour, thy ſinner is ſufficiently laden with the burden of his iniquities; lade thou me yet more with true penitent ſorrow for my ſins; and innable me then to come unto thee by a lively faith; Take thou the praiſe of thine own work; Give me the grace to come; and give me reſt in coming.

XV.

O bleſſed Saviour, What ſtrange variety of conceits do I find concerning thy thouſand years raign? What riddles are in that propheſie; which no humane tongue can aread? where to fix the beginning of that marvellous milenary, and where the end; and what manner of raign it ſhall be, whether temporal, or ſpiritual; on earth, or in heaven, undergoes as many conſtructions, as there are

pens that have undertaken it; and yet (when all is done) I ſee thine Apoſtle ſpeaks only of the ſouls of thy martyrs, raigning ſo long with thee; not of thy raigning on earth ſo long with thoſe Martyrs; How Buſie are the tongues of men, how are their brains taken up with the indeterminable conſtruction of this enigmatical truth? when, in the mean time, the care of the ſpiritual raign in their hearts, is neglected; O my Saviour, whiles others weary themſelves with the diſquiſition of thy perſonal raign here upon earth for a thouſand years; let it be the whole bent and ſtudy of my ſoul, to make ſure of my perſonal raign with thee in heaven to all eternity.

XVI.

Bleſſed be thy name, O God, who haſt made a good uſe even of hell it ſelf; How many Atheous hearts have been convinced by the very operations of Devils? Thoſe which would with the ſtupid *Saducees*, perſuade themſelves there are no ſpirits; yet when they have ſenſibly found the marvellous effects wrought even by the baſe inſtruments of Satan; they

they have been forced to confeſs. Doubtleſs there is a God that rules the world; for ſo great powers of evil ſpirits muſt neceſſarily evince the greater powers of good; It is of thy wiſe and holy diſpenſation that thy good Angels do not ſo frequently exhibite themſelves, and give ſo viſible demonſtrations of their preſence to thy Saints, as the evil Angels do to their Vaſſals, though they are ever as preſent, and more powerful; What need they; when thou ſo mightily over-ruleſt thoſe malignant ſpirits, that thou forceſt from them thine own glory, and advantage to thy choiſe? Lord, how much more ſhall all thy other Creatures ſerve to the praiſe, when thy very helliſh enemies ſhall proclaim thy juſtice, goodneſs, and omnipotence.

HVII.

Speculation, O Lord, is not more eaſie than practice is difficult; how many have we known, who, as it was ſaid of the Philoſophers of old, know, how to ſpeak well, but live ill; How many have written books of Chymiſtry, and given very confident directions for the finding out of

that precious ſtone of the Philoſophers, but how many have indeed made gold? Practice is that which thou, O God, chiefly requireſt and reſpecteſt; who haſt ſaid, *If ye know theſe things, bleſſed are ye if you do them*; *Knowledg puffeth up, but love edifyeth*, 1 Cor. 8. 1. O Lord, do thou enlighten mine eyes with the knowledg of thy will; but above all, do thou rectify my affections, *Guide my feet into the wayes of thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 112. Apply my heart to fulfil thy ſtatutes allway; and *Proſper thou the work of* my *hands upon* me, *O proſper thou* my *handiwork*. Pſal. 90. 17.

XVIII.

How oft have I wondred, O Lord, at the boldneſs of thoſe men, who knowing they muſt ſhortly die, yet dare do thoſe things which will draw upon them eternity of torments? What ſhall I ſay, but *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God.* Surely, men love themſelves well enough; and would be loth to do that, which would procure them an inevitable miſerie and pain; Did they therefore believe there were another world, and that they

they must be called to a strict reckoning for all their actions, and be doomed to an everlasting death for their wicked deeds, they durst not, they could not do those acts which should make them eternally miserable: Let me say to the most desperate Ruffian; there is poyson in this cup, drink this draught and thou diest; he would have the wit to keep his lips close, and cast the potion to the ground; were it not for their infidelity, so would men do to the most plausible (but deadly) offers of sin. O Lord, since I know thy righteous judgments; teach me to tremble at them; restrain thou my feet from every evil way; and teach me so to walk, as one that looks every hour to appear before thy just, and dreadful Tribunal.

XIX.

The longer I live, O my God, the more do I wonder at all the works of thine hands: I see such admirable artifice in the very least and most despicable of all thy Creatures, as doth every day more and more astonish my observation: I need not look so far as Heaven for matter of marvel (though

(though therein thou art infinitely glorious) whiles I have but a Spider in my window, or a Bee in my garden, or a Worm under my feet: every one of these overcomes me with a just amazement; yet can I see no more than their very outsides; their inward forme which gives them their being, and operations, I cannot pierce into; the less I can know, O Lord, the more let me wonder; and the less I can satisfie my self with marvelling at thy works, the more let me adore the Majesty and omnipotence of thee that wroughtest them.

XX.

Alas, my Lord God, what poor, weak imperfit services are those (even at the best) that I can present thee withall! How leane, lame, and blemished sacrifices do I bring to thine altar! I know thou art worthy of more than my soul is capable to perform; and fain would I tender thee the best of thine own: but, *what I would that I do not*, Rom. 7. 15. Yea, cannot do: Surely, had I not to do with an infinite mercy, I might justly look to be punished for my very obedience: But now,

Lord,

Lord, my impotence redounds to the praiſe of thy goodneſs; for were I more anſwerable to thy juſtice, the glory of thy mercy would be ſo much leſs eminent in my remiſſion, and acceptance; Here I am before thee, to await thy good pleaſure; thou knoweſt whether it be better to give me more ability, or to accept of that poor ability thou haſt given me; but ſince, when thou haſt given me moſt, I ſhall ſtill, and ever ſtand in need of thy forgiveneſs; Let my humble ſuit be to thee alwayes, rather for pardon of my defects, than for a ſupply of thy graces.

XXI.

O my God; how do I ſee many profane and careleſs ſouls ſpend their time in jollity and pleaſure: *The Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and the Pipe, and Wine are in their Feaſts*, Iſa. 5. 12. Whiles I that deſire to walk cloſe with thee, in all conſcionable obedience, droop and languiſh under a dull heavineſs, and heartleſs dejection: I am ſure I have a thouſand times more cauſe of joy and cheerfulneſs, the merrieſt of all thoſe wild and jovial ſpirits; they have a world to play withall,

but

but I have a God to rejoyce in; their ſports are trivial and momentany; my joy is ſerious, and everlaſting: One dram of my mirth is worth a pound of theirs; But, I confeſs, O Lord, how much I am wanting to my ſelf in not ſtirring up this holy fire of ſpiritual joy; but ſuffering it to lie raked up under the dead aſhes of a ſad neglect: O thou, who art the God of hope, quicken this heavenly affection in my ſoul; and *fill* me *with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. 15. 13. Make my heart ſo much more light than the worldings, by how much my eſtate is happier.

XXII.

What ſhall I do, Lord, I ſtrive and tug (what I may) with my natural corruptions, and with the ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places which ſet upon my ſoul, *Epheſ.* 6. 12. But ſometimes I am foyled, and go halting out of the field; it is thy mercy that I live, being ſo fiercely aſſaulted by thoſe principalities, and powers; it were more than wonder if I ſhould eſcape ſuch hands without a wound: Even that holy ſervant of thine who ſtrove with

with thine Angel for a bleſſing, went limping away, though he prevailed, what marvel is it that ſo weak a wretch as I, ſtriving with many evil Angels for the avoidance of a curſe, come off with a maime, or a ſcar? But bleſſed be thy name, the wounds that I recieve are not mortal; and when I fall, it is but to my knees; whence I riſe with new courage and hopes of victory; Thou who art the God of all power, and keepeſt the keys of hell and death, haſt ſaid, *Reſiſt the Devil, and he will flee from you.* Lord, I do and will by thy mercifulayd ſtill and ever reſiſt; make thou my faith as ſted faſt as my will is reſolute; Oh ſtill *teach thou my hands to war, and my fingers to fight*; Pſal. 144. 1. Arme thou my ſoul with ſtrength, and at laſt according to thy gracious promiſe, crown it with victory.

XXIII.

O Lord God; how ambitious, how covetous of knowledg is this ſoul of mine? as *the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*, Eccleſ. 1. 8. No more is the mind of man with underſtanding; yea, ſo inſatiable is my heart, that the

the more I know the more I desire to know; and the less I think I know: Under heaven there can be no bounds set to this intellectual appetite: O do thou stop the mouth of my soul with thyself, who art infinite; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee*, Ps. 73. 25. Alas, Lord, if I could know all Creatures, with all their forms, qualities, workings; If I could know as much as innocent *Adam*, or wise *Solomon*; Yea more, if I could know all that is done in earth or heaven, what were my soul the better, if it have not attained the knowledg of thee: Since, as the Preacher hath most wisely observed, *In much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledg, increaseth sorrow*, Eccles. 1. 18. Oh then, set off my heart from affecting that knowledg whose end is sorrow; and fix it upon that knowledg, which brings everlasting life: *And this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God; and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Joh. 17. 3.

XXIV.

O my God, what miserable uncertainties there are in these wordly hopes! But yesterday

yesterday I made account of an eminent advantage of my estate, which now ends in a deep loss. How did we lately feed our selves with the hope of a firme and during peace, which now shuts up in too much bloud? How confidently did I relie upon the promised favour of some great friends, which now leave me in the suds, as the scorn of (a mis-called) fortune? In how slippery places, O Lord, do our feet stand? If that may be said to stand which is ever sliding, never fixed; And not more slippery, than brittle; so as there is not more danger of falling, than of sinking: With thee, O God, with thee only, is a constant immutability of happiness: There let me seek it, there let me find it; and overlooking all the fickle objects of this vain world, let my soul pitch it self upon that blessed immortality which ere long it hopes to enjoy with thee.

XXV.

Lord God, What a wearisome circle do I walk in here below; I sleep, and dress, and work, and eat, and work again, and eat again, and undress, and sleep again; and thus wearing out my time

time find a ſatiety in all theſe, troubleſome; Lord, when ſhall I come to that ſtate, wherein I ſhall do nothing but injoy thee; do nothing but praiſe thee; and in that one work ſhall find ſuch infinite contentment, that my glorified ſoul cannot wiſh to do any other? and ſhall therein alone beſtow a bleſſed eternity?

XXVI.

O God, how troubleſome and painful do I find this Sun of thine, whoſe ſcorching beams beat upon my head? and yet, this excellent Creature of thine is that, to which, under thee, we are beholden for our very life; and it this thy great bleſſing to the earth, that it may enjoy theſe ſtrong and forcable rayes from it; Oh, Who ſhall be able to endure the burning flames of thy wrath, which thou intendeſt for the puniſhment, and everlaſting torment of thine enemies? And if men ſhall blaſpheme the name of thee the God of Heaven, *Rev.* 16.9. for the great heat of that beneficial Creature, what ſhall we think they will do for that fire which ſhall be conſuming them to all eternity? Lord, keep my ſoul from thoſe flames,

flames, which ſhall be ever burning, and never either quenched, or abated.

XXVII.

Which way, O Lord, which way can I look, and not ſee ſome ſad examples of miſery: One wants his limbs with *Mephiboſheth*, another his ſight with *Bartimeus*, a third with *Lazarus* wants bread, and a whole skin; One is pained in his body, another plundred of his eſtate, a third troubled in mind; one is pined in priſon, another tortured on the rack, a third languiſheth under the loſs of a dear ſon, or wife, or husband; Who am I, Lord, that, for the preſent, I enjoy an immunity from all theſe ſorrows? I am ſure none grones under them that hath deſerved them more: It this thy mercy, thy meer mercy, O my good God, that any of theſe calamities have faln beſide me; O make me truly thankful for thine infinite goodneſs; and yet only ſo ſenſible of thy gracious indulgence this way; as that when any of theſe evils ſhall ſeize upon me, I may be no more dejected in the ſenſe of them, than I am now overjoyed with the favor of their forbearance.

XXVIII.

XXVIII.

O bleſſed God, what variety of gifts haſt thou ſcattered amongſt the ſons of men? To one thou haſt given vigor of body, to another agility, beauty to a third; to one depth of judgment, to another quickneſs of apprehenſion; to one readineſs and rarity of invention; to another tenacity of memorie; to one the knowledg of liberal Arts, to another the exquiſiteneſs of manuary skill; to one worldly wealth, to another honour, to one a wiſe heart, to another an eloquent tongue; to one more than enough, to another contentment with a little; to one valour, to another ſagacity: Theſe favors, O Lord, thou haſt promiſcuouſly diſperſed amongſt both thy friends, and enemies: but oh, how tranſcendent are thoſe ſpiritual mercies which thou haſt reſerved for thine own; the graces of heavenly wiſdom, lively faith, fervent charity, firme hope, joy in the holy Ghoſt and all the reſt of that divine beauty. For any competency of the leaſt of thy common bleſſing I deſire to be thankful to thy bounty; (for which of them, O God, can I either

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rather merit or require?) but oh for a soul truly and eagarly ambitious of those thy best mercies; Oh let me ever long for them, and ever be insatiable of them; Oh do thou fill my heart with the desire of them, and let that desire never find itself filled.

XXIX.

How comfortable a style in that, O God, which thine *Apostle* gives thine Heaven, whiles he calls it *the inheritance of the Saints in light*? None can come there but Saints; the roomes of this lower world are taken up commonly with wicked Men, with Beast, and with Devils; but into that heavenly *Jerusalem* no unholy thing can enter; Neither can any Saint be excluded thence; each of them have not only a share, but an entire right to thy glory: And how many just titles are there: O Saviour, to that region of blessedness; it is thy Fathers gift, it is the purchase, it is thy Saints inheritance; theirs only in thy right; by thy gracious adoption they are sons, and a sons heirs, Co-heirs, with thee of that blessed Patrimony; *Rom.* 8.17. So feoffed upon them, so possessed of them, that

that they can never be diſſeized: And, Lord, how glorious an inheritance it is! An inheritance in light: In light incomprehenſible, in light inacceſſible: Lo, the moſt ſpiritual of all thy viſible Creatures is light; and yet this light is but the effect, and emanation of one of thy Creatures, the Sun; and ſerves only for the illumination of this viſible world; but that ſupernal light is from the All-glorious beams of thy Divine Majeſty, diffuſing themſelves to thoſe bleſſed ſpirits both Angels, and Souls of thy Saints, who live in the joyful fruition of thee, to all eternity: Alas, Lord, we do here dwell in darkneſs, and under an uncomfortable opacity, whiles thy face is clouded from us with manifold temptations there above, with thee, is pure light, a conſtant noontide of glory; I am here under a miſerable and obſcure wardſhip; Oh teach me to deſpiſe the beſt of earth; and raviſh my ſoul with a longing deſire of being poſſeſſed of that bleſſed *inheritance of the Saints in light.*

XXX.

What outward bleſſing can be ſweeter than civil peace? What judgment more heavy than that of the ſword? Yet, O Saviour, there is a peace which thou diſclaimeſt; and there is a ſword which thou challengeſt to bring; Peace with corruptions is war againſt thee; and that war in our boſoms, wherein the ſpirit fighteth againſt the fleſh, is peace with thee: O let thy good Spirit raiſe and foment this holy and inteſtine war more and more within me. And as for my outward ſpiritual enemies; how can there be a victory without war; and how can I hope for a crown without victory? O do thou ever gird me with ſtrength to the battle; inable me to reſiſt unto bloud; make me faithful to the death, *that thou maiſt give me the crown of life.*

XXXI.

O Lord God; how ſubject is this wretched heart of mine to repining, and diſcontentment? If it may not have what it would, how ready it is (like a froward child) to throw away what it hath. I know and feel this to be out of that natural

tural pride which is so deep rooted in me; for could I be sensible enough of my own unworthiness, I should think every thing too good, every thing too much for me; my very being, O Lord, is more than I am ever able to answer thee; and how could I deserve it when I was not? but that I have any helps of my well-being here; or hopes and means of my being glorious hereafter, how far is it beyond the reach of my soul; Lord, let me find my own nothingness; so shall I be thankful for a litle, and, in my very want, bless thee.

XXXII.

Where art thou, O my God? whither hast thou withdrawn thy self; it is not long, since I found thy comfortable presence with my soul; now I miss thee, and mourn and languish for thee: Nay, rather, where art thou, O my soul? my God is where he was; neither can be any other than himself; the change is in thee, whose inconstant disposition varyes continually, and cannot find it self fixed upon so blessed an object. It will never be better with me, O my God, until it shall

please

pleaſe thee to *ſtabliſh my heart with thy free Spirit*, Pſ. 51. 12. and to keep it cloſe to thee, that it may not be carried away with vain diſtractions, with ſinful temptations: Lord my God, as thou art alwayes preſent with me, and canſt no more be abſent, than not be thy ſelf; ſo let me be alwayes with thee, in an humble, and faithful acknowledgment of thy preſence; as I can never be out of thine all-ſeeing eye; ſo let mine eyes be ever bent upon thee who art inviſible; Thou that haſt given me eyes, improve them to thy Glory and my happineſs.

XXXIII.

My boſom, O Lord, is a *Rebeccaes* womb, there are twins ſtriving within it; a *Jacob* and *Eſau*, the old man and the new: whiles I was in the barren ſtate of my unregeneration all was quiet within me; now this ſtrife is both troubleſome, and painful; ſo as nature is ready to ſay, *If it be ſo, why am I thus?* But withall, O my God, I bleſs thee for this happy unquietneſs; for I know there is juſt cauſe of comfort in theſe inward ſtruglings; my ſoul is now not unfruitful, and is conceived

ved with an holy ſeed which wreſtles with my natural corruptions, and if my *Eſau* have got the ſtart in the priority of time; yet my *Jacob* ſhall follow him hard at the heel, and happily ſupplant him; And though I muſt nouriſh them both, as mine, yet I can, through thy grace, imitate thy choice; and ſay with thee, *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated*; Bleſſed God, make thou that word of thine good in me, That *the elder ſhall ſerve the younger.*

XXXIV.

Alas, my Lord God, how ſmall matters trouble me? every petty occurrence is ready to rob me of my peace; ſo as, me thinks, I am like ſome little cock-boat in a rough Sea, which every billow topples up and down, and threats to ſink: I can chide this weak puſillanimity in my ſelf; but it is thou that muſt redreſs it: Lord, work my heart to ſo firme a ſetledneſs upon thee, that it may never be ſhaken; no not with the violent guſts of temptation; much leſs with the eaſie gales of ſecular miſ-accidents: Even when I am hardeſt preſſed, in the multitude of the ſorrows

ſorrows of my heart, let thy comforts refreſh my ſoul; but for theſe ſleight croſſes, oh teach me to deſpiſe them, as not worthy of my notice, much leſs of my vexation: Let my heart be taken up with thee, and then, what care I whether the world ſmile or frown.

XXXV.

What a comfort it is, O Saviour, that thou art *the firſt fruits of them that ſleep:* Thoſe that die in thee, do but ſleep: Thou ſaidſt ſo once of thy *Lazarus*; and maiſt ſay ſo of him again; he doth but ſleep ſtill: His firſt ſleep was but ſhort, this latter, though longer, is no leſs true; out of which he ſhall no leſs ſurely awake at thy ſecond call, than he did before at thy firſt; His firſt ſleep and waking was ſingular, this latter is the ſame with ours; we all lie down in our bed of earth, as ſure to wake, as ever we can be to ſhut our eyes; In, and from thee, O bleſſed Saviour, is this our aſſurance; who art *the firſt fruits of them that ſleep:* The firſt handful of the firſt fruits was not preſented for it ſelf, but for the whole field, wherein it grew: The virtue of

that oblation extended it ſelf to the whole crop: Neither didſt thou, O bleſſed Jeſu, riſe again for thy ſelf only, but the power and virtue of thy reſurrection reaches to all thine; ſo thy choſen Veſſels tels us: *Chriſt the firſt fruits, afterwards they that are Chriſts at his coming:* 1 Cor. 15. 23. So as though the *reſurrection be of all the dead, both juſt and unjuſt*, Act. 24. 15. yet to riſe by the power of thy reſurrection, is ſo proper to thine own, as that thou, O Saviour, haſt ſtyled it the *reſurrection of the juſt*, Luk. 14. 14. Whiles the reſt ſhall be drag'd out of their graves by the power of thy God-head to their dreadful judgment: Already therefore, O Jeſu, are we riſen in thee: And as ſure ſhall riſe in our own perſons; The Loco-motive faculty is in the head; Thou who art our head art riſen, we who are thy members muſt, and ſhall follow: Say then, O my dying body, ſay boldly unto Death, *Rejoyce not over me, O mine enemy, for though I fall, yet I ſhall riſe again*, Micah. 7. 8. Yea, Lord, the virtue of thy firſt fruits diffuſeth it ſelf, not to our riſing only, but to a bleſ-

bleſſed immortality of theſe bodies of ours: for, as thou didſt riſe immortal and glorious, ſo ſhall we by, and with thee; *Who ſhalt change theſe vile bodies, and make them like to thy glorious body*, Phil. 3. 21. The ſame power that could ſhake off death, can put on glory and Majeſty: Lay thee down therefore, O my body, quietly and cheerfully; and look to riſe in another hue; Thou art *ſown in corruption*, thou ſhalt be *raiſed in incorruption*; thou art *ſown in diſhonour*. thou ſhalt be *raiſed in glory*; thou art *ſown in weakneſs*, but ſhalt be *raiſed in power*; 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43.

XXXVI.

In this life, in this death of the body; O Lord, I ſee there are no degrees, though differences of time; The man that died yeſterday is as truly dead, as *Abel* the firſt man that died in the world; and *Methuſelah* that lived nine hundred ſixty nine years, did not more truly live, than the child that did but ſalute, and leave the world; but in the life to come, and the ſecond death, there are degrees; degrees of bleſſedneſs to the glorified; de-

grees of torments to the damned; the least whereof is unspeakable, unconceivable: Oh thou that art the Lord of life and death, keep my soul from those steps that go down to the chambers of death; and once set it (for higher I dare not sue to go) but over the threshold of glory and blessedness.

XXXVII.

O Lord my God, I am as very a Pilgrim as ever walked upon thy earth; why should I look to be in any better condition than my neighbours, than my fathers? Even the best of them, that were most fixed upon their inheritance, have no other than strangers at home: it was not in the power of the world to naturalize them, much less to make them enrol themselves free-Denizons here below; they knew their country, which they sought, was above; so infinitely rich, and pleasant, that the earthly regions which they must pass through, are in comparison worthy of nothing but contempt.

My condition is no other than theirs; I wander here in a strange country; What wonder is it, if I meet with forrei-

ners

ners fare, hard uſage, and neglect? Why do I intermeddle with the affairs of a nation that is not mine; Why do I clog my ſelf away with the baſe and heavy Cumber of the world? Why are not my affections homeward? Why do I not long to ſee and enjoy my fathers houſe? O my God, thou that haſt put me into the ſtate of a Pilgrim, give me a Pilgrims heart; ſet me off from this wretched world wherein I am; let me hate to think of dwelling here: Let it be my only care how to paſs through this miſerable wilderneſs to the promiſed land of a bleſſed eternity.

XXXVIII.

One Talent at the leaſt, O Lord, haſt thou put into my hand; and that ſum is great to him that is not worth a dram; but, alas, what have I done with it? I confeſs I have not hid it in a napkin; but have been laying it out to ſome poor advantage; yet ſurely the gain is ſo unanſwerable, that I am afraid of an Audit: I ſee none of the approved ſervants in the Goſpel brought in an increaſe of leſs value than the receit; I fear I ſhall come ſhort of the ſum, *Luk.* 19. 16,

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17, 18, 19. O thou, who justly holdest thyself wronged with the style of *an austere master*, vouchsafe to accept of my so mean improvement; and thou, who valuedst the poor widdows mites above the rich gifts cast into thy Teasury, be pleased to allow of those few pounds that my weak indeavors could raise from thy stock; and mercifully reward thy servant, not according to his success, but according to his true intentions of glorifying thee.

XXXIX.

What a word is this which I hear from thee, O Saviour; *Behold I stand at the door and knock!* Thou which art the Lord of life, God blessed for ever, to stand and knock at the door of a sinful heart! Oh what a praise is this of thy mercy and long suffering? What a shame to our dull neglect and graceless ingratitude? For a *David* to say *I waited patiently upon the Lord*; Ps. 40. 1. *Truly my soul waiteth upon God*, ps. 62. 1. It is but meet and comely; for it is not other than the duty of the greatest Monarchs on earth, yea, of the highest Angels in Heaven to attend their Maker; but for thee the great God

of

of Heaven to wait at the door of us sinful dust and ashes, what a condescension is this, what a longanimity? It were our happiness, O Lord, if upon our greatest suit and importunity we might have the favor to entertain thee into our hearts; but that thou shouldst importune us to admit thee, and shouldst wait at the posts of our doors, till thine *head* be *filled with dew, and* thy *locks with the drops of the night*, Cant. 5.2. it is such a mercy, as there is not room enough in our souls to wonder at. In the mean time, what shall I say to our wretched unthankfulness; and impious negligence? Thou hast graciously invited us to thee, and hast said; *knock and it shal be opened*; and yet thou continuest knocking at our doors, and we open not; willingly delaying to let in our happiness; we know how easie it were for thee to break open the brasen doors of our breast, and to come in; but the Kingdom of Heaven suffers not violence from thee, though it should suffer it from us; Thou wilt do all thy works in a sweet and gracious way; as one who will not force, but win love; Lord, I cannot open

unleſs thou that knock'ſt for entrance, wilt be pleaſed to inable me with ſtrength to turn the key, and to unbolt this unweld the bar of my ſoul. O do thou make way for thy ſelf by the ſtrong motions of thy bleſſed Spirit, into the in-moſt rooms of my heart; and do thou powerfully incline me to mine own happineſs: elſe, thou ſhalt be ever excluded, and I ſhall be ever miſerable.

XLI.

In what pangs couldſt thou be, O *Aſaph*, that ſo woful a word ſhould fall from thee, *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* Pſ. 77. 19. Surely, the temptation went ſo high, that the next ſtep had been blaſphemy; Had not that good God, whom thy bold weakneſs queſtions for forgetfulneſs, in great mercy remembred thee, and brought thee ſpeedily to remember thy ſelf and him, that which thou confeſſeſt to have been infirmity, had proved a ſinful deſpair: I dare ſay for thee, that word waſhed thy cheeks with many a tear, and was worthy of more; For, O God, What can be ſo dear to thee as the glory of thy mercy? There is none of thy bleſſed attributes

tributes which thou desireſt to ſet forth ſo much unto the ſons of men, and ſo much abhorreſt to be diſparaged by our detraction, as thy mercy: Thou canſt, O Lord, forget thy diſpleaſure againſt thy people; thou canſt forget our iniquities, and caſt our ſins out of thy remembrance, *Micha.* 7. 18, 19. But thou canſt no more forget to be gracious, than thou canſt ceaſe to be thy ſelf; O my God, I ſin againſt thy juſtice hourly, and thy mercy interpoſes for my remiſſion; but oh keep me from ſinning againſt thy mercy; What plea can I hope for, when I have made my Advocate mine enemy?

XLI.

How happy, o Lord, is the man that hath thee for his God? He can want nothing that it good; he can be hurt by nothing that is evil; his ſins are pardoned; his goodendeavors are accepted; his croſſes are ſanctified; his prayers are heard; all that he hath are bleſſings, all that he ſuffers are advantages; his life is holy, his death comfortable, his eſtate after death glorious; Oh that I could feel thee to be my God; that I could enjoy an heaven'y com-

communion with thee; In vain ſhould earth or hell labour to make me other than bleſſed.

XLII.

How juſt a motion is this of thine, O thou ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*; *O love the Lord, all ye his Saints*, Pſal. 31. 23. Surely they can be no Saints that love not ſuch a Lord; Had he never been good to them, yet that infinite goodneſs which is in himſelf, would have commanded love from Saints: Yet, how could they have been Saints, if he had wholly kept his goodneſs to himſelf? In that than he hath made them Saints, he hath communicated his goodneſs to them, and challengeth all love from them; and being made ſuch, how infinitely hath he obliged them with all kind of mercies? How can ye chooſe, O ye Saints, but love the Lord? What have ye, what are ye, what can ye be, but from his meer bounty? They are ſleight favours that he hath done you for the world; in theſe his very enimies ſhare with you: How tranſcendent are his ſpiritual obligations! Hath he not given you his Angels for your attendants; himſelf

ſelf for your Protector; his Son out of his boſom for your Redeemer; his Spirit for your Comforter; his heaven for your inheritance? If gifts can attract love; O my God, Who can have any intereſt in my heart but thy bleſſed ſelf, that haſt been ſo infinitely munificent to my ſoul? Take it to thee, thou that haſt made and bought it; enamour it throughly of thy goodneſs; make me ſick of love; yea, let me die for love of thee, who haſt loved me unto death that I may fully enjoy the perfection of thy love, in the height of thy glory.

XLIII.

Lord, how have I ſeen men miſcarried into thoſe ſins, the premonition whereof they would have thought incredible, and their yeildance thereto impoſſible? How many *Hazaels* hath our very Age yeilded, that if a Prophet ſhould have foretold their acts, would have ſaid, *I thy ſervant a dog that he ſhould do theſe great things?* 2 Kings. 8. 13. O my God, why do not I ſuſpect myſelf? What hold have I of myſelf more than theſe other miſerable examples of humane frailty? Lord

Lord God, if thou take off thy hand from me, what wickedneſs ſhall eſcape me? I know I cannot want a tempter; and that tempter cannot want either power, or malice, or ſkill, or vigilance, or baits, or opportunities; and for myſelf, I find too well, that of myſelf I have no ſtrength to reſiſt any of his temptations; O for thy mercies ſake, uphold thou me with thy mighty hand; ſtand cloſe to me in all aſſaults; ſhew thyſelf ſtrong in my weakneſs: *Keep back thy ſervant from preſumptuous ſins; Let them not have dominion over me; then* (only) *ſhall I be upright, and ſhall be innocent from the great tranſgreſſion*, Pſal. 19.13.

XLIV.

It is thy title, O Lord, and only thine, that thou giveſt *ſong, in the night*, Job. 35. 10. The night is a ſad and dolorous ſeaſon; as the light contrarily is the image of cheerfulneſs, *Eccleſ.* 11. 7. like as it is in bodily pains and aches, that they are ſtill worſt towards night; ſo it is in the cares and griefs of mind; then they aſſault us moſt when they are helpt on by the advantage of an uncomfortable darkneſs:

neſs: Many men can give themſelves ſongs in the day of their proſperity; who can but howl in the night of their affliction; but for a *Paul* and *Silas* to ſing in their priſon at mid-night, *Act.* 16 25. For an *Aſaph* to *call to remembrance* his *ſong in the night*, Pſal. 77. 6. This comes only from that Spirit of thine, whoſe peculiar ſtyle is the *Comforter*: And ſurely, as muſick ſounds beſt in the night, ſo thoſe heavenly notes of praiſe which we ſing to thee our God in the gloomy darkneſs of our adverſity, cannot but be moſt pleaſing in thine ears: Thine Apoſtle bids us (which is our ordinary wont) when we are *merry*, to *ſing*, when *afflicted*, to *pray*; but if when we are afflicted we can ſing, (as alſo when we are merrieſt we can pray) that ditty muſt needs be ſo much more acceptable to thee, as it is more powerful effect of the joy of thy holy Ghoſt; O my God, I am conſcious of my own infirmity; I know I am naturally ſubject to a dull and heavy dumpiſhneſs, under whatſoever affliction; Thou that art the God of all comfort, remedy this heartleſs diſpoſition in me; pull this lead out of my boſom;

make

make me not patient only, but cheerful under my trials, fill thou my heart with joy, and my mouth with ſongs in the night of my tribulation.

XLV.

It is a true word, O Lord, that thy Seer ſaid of thee long ago; *The Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth*, 1 Sam. 16. 7. Man ſees the face, thou ſeeſt the heart; man ſees things as they ſeem, thou ſeeſt them as they are; many things are hid from the eyes of men, all things lie open and diſplaid before thee. What a madneſs then were it in me to come diſguiſed into thy preſence, and to ſeek to hide my counſels from thine all-ſeeing eyes? I muſt be content, Lord, to be deluded here by fair appearances; for I may not offer to look into the boſoms of men, which thou haſt reſerved for thyſelf; it is only the out-ſide that I can judg by; Yea, O God, if I ſhall caſt my eyes inward, and look into my own breſt, even there I find myſelf baffled at home; *The heart of man is deceitful above all things; who can know it?* None but thoſe piercing eyes of thine can diſcover all the windings and turnings of that intricate piece. What would

would it avail me, O Lord, to mock the eyes of all the world with a ſemblance of holineſs, whilſt thou ſhouldſt ſee me falſe and filthy? Should I be cenſured by a world of men, when I am ſecretly allowed by thee, I could contemn it, yea glory in their unjuſt reproach; But if thine eye ſhall note me guilty, to what purpoſe is all the applauſe of men? O thou that art the God of truth; do thou open, and diſſect this cloſe heart of mine; ſearch every fibre that is in, or about it; and if thou findeſt any ill bloud there, let it out; and if thou findeſt any hollowneſs, fill it up; and ſo work upon it, that it may be approved of thee that madeſt it, as for men, it ſhall be alike to me whether they ſpend their breath or ſave it.

XLVI.

Lord God, What a world of treaſure haſt thou hid in the bowels of the earth, which no eye of man ever did, or ſhall, or can ſee? What goodly plants haſt thou brought forth of the earth, in wild, unknown regions, which no man ever beheld?

held? What great wits haſt thou ſhut up in a willing obſcurity, which the world never takes notice of? In all which thou ſheweſt, that it is not only the uſe and benefit of man which thou regardeſt in the great variety of thy Creation, and acts of adminiſtration of the world; but thine own glory, and the fulfilling of thine own good pleaſure; and if only the Angels of heaven be witneſſes of thy great works, thou canſt not want a due celebration of thy praiſe; It is juſt with thee, O God, that thou ſhouldſt regard only thy bleſſed ſelf, in all that thou doeſt, or haſt done; for all is thine, and thou art all: O that I could ſincerely make thee the perfect ſcope of all my thoughts, of all my actions; that ſo we may both meet in one and the ſame happy end, thy glory in my eternal bleſſedneſs.

XLVII.

Indeed, Lord, as thou ſaiſt, *the night commeth when no man can work*; What can we do, when the light is ſhut in, but ſhut our eyes, and ſleep? When our ſenſes are tyed up, and our limbs laid to reſt,

reſt, what can we do, but yeild our-ſelves to a neceſſary repoſe? O my God, I perceive my night haſtening on apace, my Sun draws low, the ſhadows lengthen, vapours riſe, and the air begins to dark-en; Let me beſtir my ſelf for the time; let me loſe none of my few hours: Let me work hard a while; becauſe I ſhall ſoon reſt everlaſtingly.

XLVIII.

Thou ſeeſt, Lord, how apt I am to contemn this body of mine; Surely when I look back upon the ſtuf whereof it is made no better than that I tread upon; and ſee the loathſomneſs of all kinds that comes from it; and feel the pain that it oft times puts me to, and conſider whi-ther it is going, and how noiſome it is above all other Creatures upon the diſſo-lution; I have much ado to hold good terms with ſo unequal a partner; But on the other ſide; when I look up to thy hand, and ſee how fearfully and won-derfully thou hadſt made it; what infi-nite coſt thou haſt beſtowed upon it, in that

thou

thou haſt not thought thine own blood too dear to redeem it; that thou haſt ſo far honour'd it, as to make it the Temple of thy holy Ghoſt; and to admit it into a bleſſed communion with thyſelf; and haſt decreed to do ſo great things for it hereafter; even to cloath it with immortallity, and to make it like unto thy glorious body; I can bleſs thee for ſo happy a mate; and with patience digeſt all theſe neceſſary infirmities; and now I look upon this fleſh, not as it is withered and wrinkled; but as it will be ſhining and glorified. O Lord, how vile ſo ever this clay is in it ſelf; yet make me in thine intereſt and my hopes ſo enamoured of it, as if I did already find it made celeſtial. O that my faith could prevent my change, and anticipate my enſuing glory.

XLIX.

Lord, what a dreadful favor was that which thou ſhewedſt to thy Prophet *Elijah*, to ſend a fiery chariot for him, to conveigh him up to the Heaven! I ſhould have thought that the ſight of ſo terrible a carriage ſhould have fetcht away his ſoul

ſoul beforehand, and have left the body groveling on the earth: But that good Spirit of thine, which had fore-ſignified that fiery rapture, had doubtleſs fore-armed thy ſervant with an anſwerable reſolution to expect, and undergo it: Either he knew that chariot, how ever fearful in the appearance, was only glorious, and not penal; Or elſe he cheerfully reſolved that ſuch a momontany pain in the change would be followed with an eternity of happineſs: O God, we are not worthy to know whereto thou haſt reſerved us: Perhaps thou haſt appointed us to be in the number of thoſe, whom thou ſhalt find alive at thy ſecond coming; and then the caſe will be ours; we ſhall paſs through fire to our immortality: or, if thou haſt ordained us to a ſpeedier diſpatch, perhaps thou haſt decreed that our way to thee ſhall be through a fiery trial. O God, what ever courſe thou in thine holy wiſdom haſt determined for the fetching up my ſoul from this vale of miſery and tears, prepare me throughly for it; and do thou work my heart to ſo lively a faith in thee, that all the terrors

rors of my death may be ſwallowed up in an aſſured expectation of my ſpeedy glory: and that my laſt groans ſhal be immediately ſeconded with eternal Allelujahs, in the glorious Chore of thy Saints and Angels in Heaven. *Amen. Amen.*

FINIS.

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